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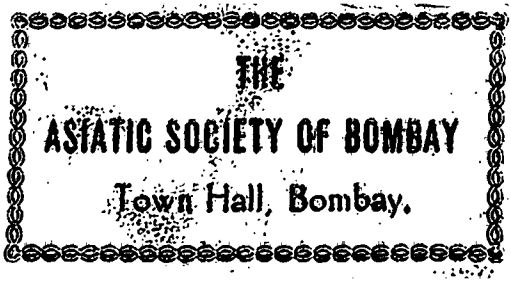

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THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

VOL. XII.

52591

DRAMAS.

EDINBURGH:
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK.
1861.

ADVERTISEMENT.

[This volume contains all the dramatic pieces which Sir Walter Scott ever published; namely, the translation of Goetz von Berlichingen, which appeared in 1799; the House of Aspen, which was written at the same early period, though it was first printed in *The Keepsake* for 1830; Halidon Hill, written and published in 1822; MacDuff's Cross, 1823; and the Doom of Devorgoil, and the Aryshire Tragedy, which appeared together in 1830.

The Editor had some scruples about reprinting the version of Goetz of the Iron Hand; but it marks so important a period in the Author's studies, that, on the whole, he considered it proper to insert it, though in a smaller type, and in the shape of an Appendix.]

PREFACE

TO

HALIDON HILL.

PREFACE

TO

HALIDON HILL.

THOUGH the Public seldom feel much interest in such communications (nor is there any reason why they should), the Author takes the liberty of stating, that these scenes were commenced with the purpose of contributing to a miscellany projected by a much-esteemed friend.[1] But instead of being confined to a scene or two, as intended, the work gradually swelled to the size of an independent publication. It is designed to illustrate military antiquities, and the manners of chivalry. The Drama (if it can be termed one) is,

[1] [The author alludes to a collection of small pieces in verse, edited, for a charitable purpose, by Mrs Joanna Baillie.]

in no particular, either designed or calculated for the stage.[1]

The subject is to be found in Scottish history; but, not to overload so slight a publication with antiquarian research, or quotations from obscure

[1] [In the first edition, the text added: "In case any attempt shall be made to produce it in action (as has happened in similar cases), the author takes the present opportunity to intimate, that it shall be at the peril of those who make such an experiment." Adverting to this passage, the *New Edinburgh Review* (July, 1822) said—"We, nevertheless, do not believe that any thing more essentially dramatic, in so far as it goes, more capable of stage effect, has appeared in England since the days of her greatest genius; and giving Sir Walter, therefore, full credit for his coyness on the present occasion, we ardently hope that he is but trying his strength in the most arduous of all literary enterprises, and that, erelong, he will demonstrate his right to the highest honours of the tragic muse." The *British Critic*, for October, 1822, says, on the same head: "Though we may not accede to the author's declaration, that it is '*in no particular* calculated for the stage,' we must not lead our readers to look for any thing amounting to a regular drama. It would, we think, form an underplot of very great interest, in an historical play of customary length; and although its incidents and personages are mixed up, in these scenes, with an event of real history, there is nothing in either to prevent their being interwoven in the plot of any drama of which the action should lie in the confines of England and Scotland, at any of the very numerous periods of Border warfare. The whole interest, indeed, of the story, is engrossed by two characters, imagined, as it appears to us, with great force and probability, and contrasted with considerable skill and effect."]

chronicles, may be sufficiently illustrated by the following passage from *Pinkerton's History of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 72.

"The Governor (anno 1402) despatched a considerable force under Murdac, his eldest son; the Earls of Angus and Moray also joined Douglas, who entered England with an army of ten thousand men, carrying terror and devastation to the walls of Newcastle.

"Henry IV. was now engaged in the Welsh war against Owen Glendour; but the Earl of Northumberland, and his son, the Hotspur Percy, with the Earl of March, collected a numerous array, and awaited the return of the Scots, impeded with spoil, near Milfield, in the north part of Northumberland. Douglas had reached Wooler, in his return; and, perceiving the enemy, seized a strong post between the two armies, called Homildon-hill. In this method he rivalled his predecessor at the battle of Otterburn, but not with like success. The English advanced to the assault, and Henry Percy was about to lead them up the hill, when March caught his bridle, and

advised him to advance no further, but to pour the dreadful shower of English arrows into the enemy. This advice was followed with the usual fortune; for in all ages the bow was the English instrument of victory; and though the Scots, and perhaps the French, were superior in the use of the spear, yet this weapon was useless after the distant bow had decided the combat. Robert the Great, sensible of this at the battle of Bannockburn, ordered a prepared detachment of cavalry to rush among the English archers at the commencement, totally to disperse them, and stop the deadly effusion. But Douglas now used no such precaution; and the consequence was, that his people, drawn up on the face of the hill, presented one general mark to the enemy, none of whose arrows descended in vain. The Scots fell without fight, and unrevenged, till a spirited knight, Swinton, exclaimed aloud, 'O my brave countrymen! what fascination has seized you to-day, that you stand like deer to be shot, instead of indulging your ancient courage, and meeting your enemies hand to hand? Let those who will, descend with me, that we may gain victory, or life, or fall like

men.'[1] This being heard by Adam Gordon, between whom and Swinton there existed an ancient deadly feud, attended with the mutual slaughter of many followers, he instantly fell on his knees before Swinton, begged his pardon, and desired to be dubbed a knight by him whom he must now regard as the wisest and the boldest of that order in Britain. The ceremony performed, Swinton and Gordon descended the hill, accompanied only by one hundred men; and a desperate valour led the whole body to death. Had a similar spirit been shewn by the Scottish army, it is probable that the event of the day would have been different. Douglas, who was certainly deficient in the most important qualities of a general, seeing his army begin to disperse, at length attempted to descend the hill; but the English archers, retiring a little,

[1] ["Miles magnanimus dominus Johannes Swinton, tanquam voce horrida præconis exclamavit, dicens, O commilitones inclyti! quis vos hodie fascinavit non indulgere solitæ probitati, quod nec dextris conseritis, nec ut viricorda erigitis, ad invadendum æmulos, qui vos, tanquam damulos vel hinnulos imparcatos, sagittarum jaculis perdere festinant. Descendant mecum qui velint, et in nomine Domini hostes penetrabimus, ut vel sic vita potiamur, vel saltem ut milites cum honore occumbamus," &c.—*Fordun, Scoti-Chronicon*, vol. ii. p. 434.

sent a flight of arrows so sharp and strong, that no armour could withstand; and the Scottish leader himself, whose panoply was of remarkable temper, fell under five wounds, though not mortal. The English men-of-arms, knights, or squires, did not strike one blow, but remained spectators of the rout, which was now complete. Great numbers of the Scots were slain, and near five hundred perished in the river Tweed upon their flight. Among the illustrious captives was Douglas, whose chief wound deprived him of an eye; Murdac, son of Albany; the Earls of Moray and Angus; and about twenty-four gentlemen of eminent rank and power. The chief slain were, Swinton, Gordon, Livingston of Calendar, Ramsay of Dalhousie, Walter Sinclair, Roger Gordon, Walter Scott, and others. Such was the issue of the unfortunate battle of Homildon."

It may be proper to observe, that the scene of action has, in the following pages, been transferred from Homildon to Halidon Hill. For this there was an obvious reason;—for who would again venture to introduce upon the scene the celebrated Hotspur, who commanded the English at the

former battle? There are, however, several coincidences which may reconcile even the severer antiquary to the substitution of Halidon Hill for Homildon. A Scottish army was defeated by the English on both occasions, and under nearly the same circumstances of address on the part of the victors, and mismanagement on that of the vanquished, for the English long-bow decided the day in both cases. In both cases, also, a Gordon was left on the field of battle; and at Halidon, as at Homildon, the Scots were commanded by an ill-fated representative of the great house of Douglas. He of Homildon was surnamed *Tine-man*, i. e. *Lose-man*, from his repeated defeats and miscarriages; and, with all the personal valour of his race, seems to have enjoyed so small a portion of their sagacity, as to be unable to learn military experience from reiterated calamity. I am far, however, from intimating, that the traits of imbecility and envy attributed to the Regent in the following sketch, are to be historically ascribed either to the elder Douglas of Halidon Hill, or to him called *Tine-man*, who seems to have enjoyed the respect of his countrymen, notwithstanding

that, like the celebrated Anne de Montmorency, he was either defeated, or wounded, or made prisoner, in every battle which he fought. The Regent of the sketch is a character purely imaginary.

The tradition of the Swinton family, which still survives in a lineal descent, and to which the author has the honour to be related, avers, that the Swinton who fell at Homildon in the manner narrated in the preceding extract, had slain Gordon's father; which seems sufficient ground for adopting that circumstance into the following Dramatic Sketch, though it is rendered improbable by other authorities.

If any reader will take the trouble of looking at Froissart, Fordun, or other historians of the period, he will find, that the character of the Lord of Swinton, for strength, courage, and conduct, is by no means exaggerated.

W. S.

ABBOTSFORD, 1822.

HALIDON HILL;

A

DRAMATIC SKETCH,

FROM

SCOTTISH HISTORY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SCOTTISH.

THE REGENT OF SCOTLAND.

GORDON,
SWINTON,
LENNOX,
SUTHERLAND,
ROSS,
MAXWELL,
JOHNSTONE,
LINDESAY,
} *Scottish Chiefs and Nobles.*

ADAM DE VIPONT, *a Knight Templar.*
THE PRIOR OF MAISON-DIEU.
REYNALD, *Swinton's Squire.*
HOB HATTELY, *a Border Moss-Trooper.*
Heralds.

ENGLISH.

KING EDWARD III.

CHANDOS,
PERCY,
RIBAUMONT,
} *English and Norman Nobles.*

THE ABBOT OF WALTHAMSTOW.

HALIDON HILL.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

The northern side of the eminence of Halidon. The back Scene represents the summit of the ascent, occupied by the Rear-guard of the Scottish army. Bodies of armed Men appear as advancing from different points, to join the main Body.

Enter DE VIPONT *and the* PRIOR OF MAISON-DIEU.

VIPONT.

No farther, Father—here I need no guidance—
I have already brought your peaceful step
Too near the verge of battle.

PRIOR.

Fain would I see you join some Baron's banner,
Before I say farewell. The honour'd sword
That fought so well in Syria, should not wave
Amid the ignoble crowd.

VIPONT.

Each spot is noble in a pitched field,
So that a man has room to fight and fall on 't.
But I shall find out friends. 'Tis scarce twelve years
Since I left Scotland for the wars of Palestine,
And then the flower of all the Scottish nobles
Were known to me; and I, in my degree,
Not all unknown to them.

PRIOR.

Alas! there have been changes since that time;
The Royal Bruce, with Randolph, Douglas, Grahame,
Then shook in field the banners which now moulder
Over their graves i' the chancel.

VIPONT.

And thence comes it,
That while I look'd on many a well-known crest
And blazon'd shield,[1] as hitherward we came,
The faces of the Barons who displayed them
Were all unknown to me. Brave youths they seem'd;
Yet, surely, fitter to adorn the tilt-yard,
Than to be leaders of a war. Their followers,
Young like themselves, seem like themselves unpractised—
Look at their battle-rank.

PRIOR.

I cannot gaze on 't with undazzled eye,
So thick the rays dart back from shield and helmet,

[1] [MS.—"I've look'd on many a well-known pennon
Playing the air," &c.]

And sword and battle-axe, and spear and pennon.
Sure 'tis a gallant show! The Bruce himself
Hath often conquer'd at the head of fewer
And worse appointed followers.

VIPONT.

Ay, but 'twas Bruce that led them. Reverend Father,
'Tis not the falchion's weight decides a combat;
It is the strong and skilful hand that wields it.
Ill fate, that we should lack the noble King,
And all his champions now! Time call'd them not,
For when I parted hence for Palestine,
The brows of most were free from grizzled hair.

PRIOR.

Too true, alas! But well you know, in Scotland,
Few hairs are silver'd underneath the helmet;
'Tis cowls like mine which hide them. 'Mongst the laity,
War's the rash reaper, who thrusts in his sickle
Before the grain is white. In threescore years
And ten, which I have seen, I have outlived
Wellnigh two generations of our nobles.
The race which holds[1] yon summit is the third.

VIPONT.

Thou mayst outlive them also.

PRIOR.

Heaven forefend!
My prayer shall be, that Heaven will close my eyes,
Before they look upon the wrath to come.

[1] [MS.—"The youths who hold," &c., "are."]

VIPONT.

Retire, retire, good Father!—Pray for Scotland—
Think not on me. Here comes an ancient friend,
Brother in arms, with whom to-day I'll join me.
Back to your choir, assemble all your brotherhood,
And weary Heaven with prayers for victory.[1]

PRIOR.

Heaven's blessing rest with thee,
Champion of Heaven, and of thy suffering country!

[*Exit* PRIOR. VIPONT *draws a little aside, and lets down the beaver of his helmet.*

Enter SWINTON, *followed by* REYNALD *and others, to whom he speaks as he enters.*

SWINTON.

Halt here, and plant my pennon, till the Regent
Assign our band its station in the host.

REYNALD.

That must be by the Standard. We have had
That right since good Saint David's reign at least.
Fain would I see the Marcher would dispute it.

SWINTON.

Peace, Reynald! Where the general plants the soldier,
There is his place of honour, and there only
His valour can win worship. Thou'rt of those,
Who would have war's deep art bear the wild semblance
Of some disorder'd hunting, where, pell-mell,

[1] [MS.——"with prayers for Scotland's weal."]

Each trusting to the swiftness of his horse,
Gallants press on to see the quarry fall.
Yon steel-clad Southrons, Reynald, are no deer;
And England's Edward is no stag at bay.

VIPONT (*advancing*).

There needed not, to blazon forth the Swinton,
His ancient burgonet, the sable Boar
Chain'd to the gnarl'd oak,[1]—nor his proud step,
Nor giant stature, nor the ponderous mace,
Which only he, of Scotland's realm, can wield:
His discipline and wisdom mark the leader,
As doth his frame the champion. Hail, brave Swinton!

SWINTON.

Brave Templar, thanks! Such your cross'd shoulder speaks you;
But the closed visor, which conceals your features,
Forbids more knowledge. Umfraville, perhaps—

VIPONT (*unclosing his helmet*).

No; one less worthy of our sacred Order.
Yet, unless Syrian suns have scorch'd my features
Swart as my sable visor, Alan Swinton
Will welcome Symon Vipont.

SWINTON (*embracing him*).

As the blithe reaper
Welcomes a practised mate, when the ripe harvest

[1] ["The armorial bearings of the ancient family of Swinton are *sable*, a cheveron, *or*, between three boars' heads erased, *argent*. CREST—a boar chained to a tree, and above, on a scroll, *J'espère*. SUPPORTERS—two boars standing on a compartment, whereon are the words, *Je Pense*."—*Douglas's Baronage*, p. 132.]

Lies deep before him, and the sun is high!
Thou 'lt follow yon old pennon, wilt thou not?
'Tis tatter'd since thou saw'st it, and the Boar-heads
Look as if brought from off some Christmas board,
Where knives had notch'd them deeply.

VIPONT.

Have with them, ne'ertheless. The Stuart's Chequer,
The Bloody Heart of Douglas, Ross's Lymphads,
Sutherland's Wild-cats, nor the royal Lion,
Rampant in golden treasure, wins me from them.
We 'll back the Boar-heads bravely. I see round them
A chosen band of lances—some well known to me.
Where 's the main body of thy followers?

SWINTON.

Symon de Vipont, thou dost see them all
That Swinton's bugle-horn can call to battle,
However loud it rings. There 's not a boy
Left in my halls, whose arm has strength enough
To bear a sword—there 's not a man behind,
However old, who moves without a staff.
Striplings and greybeards, every one is here,
And here all should be—Scotland needs them all;
And more and better men, were each a Hercules,
And yonder handful centuplied.

VIPONT.

A thousand followers—such, with friends and kinsmen,
Allies and vassals, thou wert wont to lead—
A thousand followers shrunk to sixty lances

In twelve years' space!—And thy brave sons, Sir Alan?
Alas! I fear to ask.

SWINTON.

All slain, De Vipont. In my empty home
A puny babe lisps to a widow'd mother,
"Where is my grandsire? wherefore do you weep?"
But for that prattler, Lyulph's house is heirless.
I'm an old oak, from which the foresters
Have hew'd four goodly boughs, and left beside me
Only a sapling, which the fawn may crush
As he springs over it.

VIPONT.

All slain?—alas!

SWINTON.

Ay, all, De Vipont. And their attributes,
John with the Long Spear—Archibald with the Axe—
Richard the Ready—and my youngest darling,
My Fair-hair'd William—do but now survive
In measures which the gray-hair'd minstrels sing,
When they make maidens weep.

VIPONT.

These wars with England, they have rooted out
The flowers of Christendom. Knights, who might win
The sepulchre of Christ from the rude heathen,
Fall in unholy warfare!

SWINTON.

Unholy warfare? ay, well hast thou named it;
But not with England—would her cloth-yard shafts
Had bored their cuirasses! Their lives had been

Lost like their grandsire's, in the bold defence
Of their dear country[1]—but in private feud
With the proud Gordon, fell my Long-spear'd John,
He with the Axe, and he men called the Ready,
Ay, and my Fair-hair'd Will—the Gordon's wrath
Devour'd my gallant issue.

VIPONT.

Since thou dost weep, their death is unavenged?

SWINTON.

Templar, what think'st thou me?—See yonder rock,
From which the fountain gushes—is it less
Compact of adamant, though waters flow from it?
Firm hearts have moister eyes.—They *are* avenged;
I wept not till they were—till the proud Gordon
Had with his life-blood dyed my father's sword,
In guerdon that he thinn'd my father's lineage,
And then I wept my sons; and, as the Gordon
Lay at my feet, there was a tear for him,
Which mingled with the rest. We had been friends,
Had shared the banquet and the chase together,
Fought side by side—and our first cause of strife,
Woe to the pride of both, was but a light one!

VIPONT.

You are at feud, then, with the mighty Gordon?

SWINTON.

At deadly feud. Here in this Border-land,
Where the sire's quarrels descend upon the son,

[1] [MS.—"Of the dear land that nursed them—but in feud."]

As due a part of his inheritance,
As the strong castle and the ancient blazon,
Where private Vengeance holds the scales of justice,
Weighing each drop of blood as scrupulously
As Jews or Lombards balance silver pence,
Not in this land, 'twixt Solway and Saint Abb's,
Rages a bitterer feud than mine and theirs,
The Swinton and the Gordon.

VIPONT.

You, with some threescore lances—and the Gordon
Leading a thousand followers.

SWINTON.

You rate him far too low. Since you sought Palestine,
He hath had grants of baronies and lordships
In the far-distant North. A thousand horse
His southern friends and vassals always number'd.
Add Badenoch kerne, and horse from Dey and Spey,
He'll count a thousand more.—And now, De Vipont,
If the Boar-heads seem in your eyes less worthy
For lack of followers—seek yonder standard—
The bounding Stag, with a brave host around it;
There the young Gordon makes his earliest field,
And pants to win his spurs. His father's friend,
As well as mine, thou wert—go, join his pennon,
And grace him with thy presence.

VIPONT.

When you were friends, I was the friend of both,
And now I can be enemy to neither;
But my poor person, though but slight the aid,

Joins on this field the banner of the two
Which hath the smallest following.

SWINTON.

Spoke like the generous Knight, who gave up all,
Leading and lordship, in a heathen land
To fight, a Christian soldier! Yet, in earnest,
I pray, De Vipont, you would join the Gordon
In this high battle. 'Tis a noble youth—
So fame doth vouch him—amorous, quick, and valiant;
Takes knighthood, too, this day, and well may use
His spurs too rashly[1] in the wish to win them.
A friend like thee beside him in the fight,
Were worth a hundred spears, to rein his valour
And temper it with prudence:—'tis the aged eagle
Teaches his brood to gaze upon the sun,
With eye undazzled.

VIPONT.

Alas, brave Swinton! Wouldst thou train the hunter
That soon must bring thee to the bay? Your custom,
Your most unchristian, savage, fiend-like custom,
Binds Gordon to avenge his father's death.

SWINTON.

Why, be it so! I look for nothing else:
My part was acted when I slew his father,
Avenging my four sons—Young Gordon's sword,
If it should find my heart, can ne'er inflict there
A pang so poignant as his father's did.

[1] [MS.—"Sharply."]

But I would perish by a noble hand,
And such will his be if he bear him nobly,
Nobly and wisely on this field of Halidon.

Enter a PURSUIVANT.

PURSUIVANT.

Sir Knights, to council!—'tis the Regent's order,
That knights and men of leading meet him instantly
Before the royal standard. Edward's army
Is seen from the hill-summit.

SWINTON.

Say to the Regent, we obey his orders.

[*Exit* PURSUIVANT.

[*To* REYNALD.] Hold thou my casque, and furl my pennon up
Close to the staff. I will not shew my crest,
Nor standard, till the common foe shall challenge them.
I'll wake no civil strife, nor tempt the Gordon
With aught that's like defiance.

VIPONT.

Will he not know your features?

SWINTON.

He never saw me. In the distant North,
Against his will, 'tis said, his friends detain'd him
During his nurture—caring not, belike,
To trust a pledge so precious near the Boar-tusks.
It was a natural but needless caution:

I wage no war with children, for I think
Too deeply on mine own.

VIPONT.

I have thought on it, and will see the Gordon
As we go hence[1] to council. I do bear
A cross, which binds me to be Christian priest,
As well as Christian champion.[2] God may grant,
That I, at once his father's friend and yours,
May make some peace betwixt you.[3]

SWINTON.

When that your priestly zeal, and knightly valour,
Shall force the grave to render up the dead.

[*Exeunt severally.*

[1] [MS.—"As we do pass," &c.]

[2] [MS.—"The cross I wear appoints me Christian priest,
As well as Christian warrior," &c.]

[3] [In the MS. the scene terminates with this line.]

SCENE II.

The summit of Halidon Hill, before the Regent's Tent. The Royal Standard of Scotland is seen in the background, with the Pennons and Banners of the principal Nobles around it.

Council of Scottish Nobles and Chiefs. SUTHERLAND, ROSS, LENNOX, MAXWELL, *and other Nobles of the highest rank, are close to the* REGENT'S *person, and in the act of keen debate.* VIPONT, *with* GORDON *and others, remained grouped at some distance on the right hand of the Stage. On the left, standing also apart, is* SWINTON, *alone and bare-headed. The Nobles are dressed in Highland or Lowland habits, as historical costume requires. Trumpets, Heralds, &c. are in attendance.*

LENNOX.

Nay, Lordings, put no shame upon my counsels.
I did but say, if we retired a little,
We should have fairer field and better vantage.
I've seen King Robert—ay, the Bruce himself—
Retreat six leagues in length, and think no shame on't.

REGENT.

Ay, but King Edward sent a haughty message,
Defying us to battle on this field,
This very hill of Halidon; if we leave it
Unfought withal, it squares not with our honour.

SWINTON (*apart*).

A perilous honour, that allows the enemy,
And such an enemy as this same Edward,
To choose our field of battle! He knows how
To make our Scottish pride betray its master
Into the pitfall.

[*During this speech the debate among the Nobles is continued.*

SUTHERLAND (*aloud*).

We will not back one furlong—not one yard,
No, nor one inch; where'er we find the foe,
Or where the foe finds us, there will we fight him.
Retreat will dull the spirit of our followers,
Who now stand prompt for battle.

ROSS.

My Lords, methinks great Morarchat[1] has doubts,
That, if his Northern clans once turn the seam
Of their check'd hose behind, it will be hard
To halt and rally them.

SUTHERLAND.

Say'st thou, MacDonnell?—Add another falsehood,
And name when Morarchat was coward or traitor?
Thine island race, as chronicles can tell,
Were oft affianced to the Southron cause;
Loving the weight and temper of their gold,
More than the weight and temper of their steel.

[1] [Morarchate is the ancient Gaelic designation of the Earls of Sutherland. See *ante*, vol. x., page 378, *note*.]

REGENT.

Peace, my Lords, ho!

ROSS (*throwing down his Glove*).

MacDonnell will not peace! There lies my pledge,
Proud Morarchat, to witness thee a liar.

MAXWELL.

Brought I all Nithsdale from the Western Border;
Left I my towers exposed to foraying England,
And thieving Annandale, to see such misrule?

JOHNSTONE.

Who speaks of Annandale? Dare Maxwell slander
The gentle House of Lochwood?[1]

REGENT.

Peace, Lordings, once again. We represent
The Majesty of Scotland—in our presence
Brawling is treason.

SUTHERLAND.

Were it in presence of the King himself,
What should prevent my saying——

Enter LINDESAY.

LINDESAY.

You must determine quickly. Scarce a mile
Parts our vanguard from Edward's. On the plain,
Bright gleams of armour flash through clouds of dust,
Like stars through frost-mist—steeds neigh, and weapons clash—

[1] [Lochwood Castle was the ancient seat of the Johnstones, Lords of Annandale.]

And arrows soon will whistle—the worst sound
That waits on English war.—You must determine.

REGENT.

We are determined. We will spare proud Edward
Half of the ground that parts us.—Onward, Lords;
Saint Andrew strike for Scotland! We will lead
The middle ward ourselves, the Royal Standard
Display'd beside us; and beneath its shadow
Shall the young gallants, whom we knight this day,
Fight for their golden spurs.—Lennox, thou'rt wise,
And wilt obey command—lead thou the rear.

LENNOX.

The rear!—why I the rear? The van were fitter
For him who fought abreast with Robert Bruce.

SWINTON (*apart*).

Discretion hath forsaken Lennox too!
The wisdom he was forty years in gathering
Has left him in an instant. 'Tis contagious
Even to witness frenzy.

SUTHERLAND.

The Regent hath determined well. The rear
Suits him the best who counsell'd our retreat.

LENNOX.

Proud Northern Thane, the van were soon the rear,
Were thy disorder'd followers planted there.

SUTHERLAND.

Then, for that very word, I make a vow,
By my broad Earldom, and my father's soul,

That if I have not leading of the van,
I will not fight to-day!

ROSS.

Morarchat! thou the leading of the van!
Not whilst MacDonnell lives.

SWINTON (*apart*).

Nay, then a stone would speak.
[*Addresses the* REGENT.] May't please your Grace,
And you, great Lords, to hear an old man's counsel,
That hath seen fights enow. These open bickerings
Dishearten all our host. If that your Grace,
With these great Earls and Lords, must needs debate,
Let the closed tent conceal your disagreement;
Else 'twill be said, ill fares it with the flock,
If shepherds wrangle, when the wolf is nigh.

REGENT.

The old Knight counsels well. Let every Lord
Or Chief, who leads five hundred men or more,
Follow to council—others are excluded—
We'll have no vulgar censurers of our conduct—
[*Looking at* SWINTON.
Young Gordon, your high rank and numerous following
Give you a seat with us, though yet unknighted.

GORDON.

I pray you, pardon me. My youth's unfit
To sit in council, when that Knight's gray hairs
And wisdom wait without.

REGENT.

Do as you will; we deign not bid you twice.

[*The* REGENT, ROSS, SUTHERLAND, LENNOX, MAXWELL, *&c. enter the Tent. The rest remain grouped about the Stage.*

GORDON (*observing* SWINTON).

That helmetless old Knight, his giant stature,
His awful accents of rebuke and wisdom,
Have caught my fancy strangely. He doth seem
Like to some vision'd form which I have dream'd of,
But never saw with waking eyes till now.
I will accost him.

VIPONT.

Pray you, do not so;
Anon I 'll give you reason why you should not.
There 's other work in hand——

GORDON.

I will but ask his name. There's in his presence
Something that works upon me like a spell,
Or like the feeling made my childish ear
Dote upon tales of superstitious dread,
Attracting while they chill'd my heart with fear.
Now, born the Gordon, I do feel right well
I 'm bound to fear nought earthly—and I fear nought.
I 'll know who this man is——

[*Accosts* SWINTON.

Sir Knight, I pray you, of your gentle courtesy,
To tell your honour'd name. I am ashamed,
Being unknown in arms, to say that mine
Is Adam Gordon.

SWINTON (*shews emotion, but instantly subdues it*).
It is a name that soundeth in my ear
Like to a death-knell—ay, and like the call
Of the shrill trumpet to the mortal lists;
Yet 'tis a name which ne'er hath been dishonour'd,
And never will, I trust—most surely never
By such a youth as thou.

GORDON.
There 's a mysterious courtesy in this,
And yet it yields no answer to my question.
I trust you hold the Gordon not unworthy
To know the name he asks?

SWINTON.
Worthy of all that openness and honour
May shew to friend or foe—but, for my name,
Vipont will shew it you; and, if it sound
Harsh in your ear,[1] remember that it knells there
But at your own request. This day, at least,
Though seldom wont to keep it in concealment,
As there 's no cause I should, *you* had not heard it.

GORDON.
This strange——

VIPONT.
The mystery is needful. Follow me.
[*They retire behind the side Scene.*

[1] ["A name unmusical to Volscian ears,
And harsh in sound to thine."—*Coriolanus.*]

SWINTON (*looking after them*).

'Tis a brave youth. How blush'd his noble cheek,
While youthful modesty, and the embarrassment
Of curiosity, combined with wonder,
And half suspicion of some slight intended,
All mingled in the flush; but soon 'twill deepen
Into revenge's glow. How slow is Vipont!—
I wait the issue, as I 've seen spectators
Suspend the motion even of the eyelids,
When the slow gunner, with his lighted match,
Approach'd the charged cannon, in the act
To waken its dread slumbers.—Now 'tis out;
He draws his sword, and rushes towards me,
Who will nor seek nor shun him.

Enter GORDON, *withheld by* VIPONT.

VIPONT.

Hold, for the sake of Heaven!—O, for the sake
Of your dear country, hold!—Has Swinton slain your father,
And must you, therefore, be yourself a parricide,
And stand recorded as the selfish traitor,
Who, in her hour of need, his country's cause
Deserts, that he may wreak a private wrong?—
Look to yon banner—that is Scotland's standard;
Look to the Regent—he is Scotland's general;
Look to the English—they are Scotland's foemen!

Bethink thee, then, thou art a son of Scotland,
And think on nought beside.[1]

GORDON.

He hath come here to brave me!—Off! unhand me!—
Thou canst not be my father's ancient friend,
That stand'st 'twixt me and him who slew my father.

VIPONT.

You know not Swinton. Scarce one passing thought
Of his high mind was with you; now, his soul
Is fix'd on this day's battle. You might slay him
At unawares before he saw your blade drawn.—
Stand still, and watch him close.[2]

Enter MAXWELL *from the Tent.*

SWINTON.

How go our councils, Maxwell, may I ask?

MAXWELL.

As wild, as if the very wind and sea
With every breeze and every billow battled
For their precedence.[3]

SWINTON.

Most sure they are possess'd! Some evil spirit,

[1] [In the MS. the five last lines of Vipont's speech are interpolated.]

[2] [MS.—"You must not here—not where the Royal Standard
Awaits the attack of Scotland's enemies,
Against the common foe—wage private quarrel.
He braves you not—his thought is on the event
Of this day's field. Stand still, and watch him closer."]
["Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend
Which is the mightier."—*Hamlet.*]

To mock their valour, robs them of discretion.
Fie, fie, upon't!—O, that Dunfermline's tomb
Could render up The Bruce! that Spain's red shore
Could give us back the good Lord James of Douglas!
Or that fierce Randolph, with his voice of terror,
Were here, to awe these brawlers to submission!

VIPONT (*to* GORDON).

Thou hast perused him at more leisure now.

GORDON.

I see the giant form which all men speak of,
The stately port—but not the sullen eye,
Not the bloodthirsty look, that should belong
To him that made me orphan. I shall need
To name my father twice ere I can strike
At such gray hairs, and face of such command;
Yet my hand clenches on my falchion-hilt,
In token he shall die.

VIPONT.

Need I again remind you, that the place
Permits not private quarrel?

GORDON.

I'm calm. I will not seek—nay, I will shun it—
And yet methinks that such debate's the fashion.
You've heard how taunts, reproaches, and the lie,
The lie itself, have flown from mouth to mouth;
As if a band of peasants were disputing
About a foot-ball match, rather than Chiefs
Were ordering a battle. I am young,

And lack experience; tell me, brave De Vipont,
Is such the fashion of your wars in Palestine?

VIPONT.

Such it at times hath been; and then the Cross
Hath sunk before the Crescent. Heaven's cause
Won us not victory where wisdom was not.—
Behold yon English host come slowly on,
With equal front, rank marshall'd upon rank,
As if one spirit ruled one moving body;
The leaders, in their places, each prepared
To charge, support, and rally, as the fortune
Of changeful battle needs:—then look on ours,
Broken, disjointed, as the tumbling surges
Which the winds wake at random. Look on both,
And dread the issue; yet there might be succour.

GORDON.

We 're fearfully o'ermatch'd in discipline;
So even my inexperienced eye can judge.
What succour save in Heaven?

VIPONT.

Heaven acts by human means. The artist's skill
Supplies in war, as in mechanic crafts,
Deficiency of tools. There's courage, wisdom,
And skill enough, live in one leader here,
As, flung into the balance, might avail
To counterpoise the odds 'twixt that ruled host
And our wild multitude.—I must not name him.

GORDON.

I guess, but dare not ask.—What band is yonder,

Arranged so closely as the English discipline
Hath marshall'd their best files?

VIPONT.

Know'st thou not the pennon?
One day, perhaps, thou 'lt see it all too closely—
It is Sir Alan Swinton's.

GORDON.

These, then, are his—the relics of his power;
Yet worth an host of ordinary men.—
And I must slay my country's sagest leader,
And crush by numbers that determined handful,
When most my country needs their practised aid,
Or men will say, "There goes degenerate Gordon;
His father's blood is on the Swinton's sword,
And his is in his scabbard!" [*Muses.*

VIPONT (*apart*).

High blood and mettle, mix'd with early wisdom,
Sparkle in this brave youth. If he survive
This evil-omen'd day, I pawn my word,
That, in the ruin which I now forebode,
Scotland has treasure left.—How close he eyes
Each look and step of Swinton! Is it hate,
Or is it admiration, or are both
Commingled strangely in that steady gaze?

[SWINTON *and* MAXWELL *return from the bottom of the Stage.*

MAXWELL.

The storm is laid at length amongst these counsellors;—
See, they come forth.

SWINTON.

And it is more than time;
For I can mark the vanguard archery
Handling their quivers—bending up their bows.

Enter the REGENT *and Scottish Lords.*

REGENT.

Thus shall it be, then, since we may no better:
And, since no Lord will yield one jot of way
To this high urgency, or give the vanguard
Up to another's guidance, we will abide them
Even on this bent; and as our troops are rank'd,
So shall they meet the foe. Chief, nor Thane,
Nor Noble, can complain of the precedence
Which chance has thus assign'd him.

SWINTON (*apart*).

O, sage discipline,
That leaves to chance the marshalling of a battle!

GORDON.

Move him to speech, De Vipont.

VIPONT.

Move *him!*—Move whom?

GORDON.

Even him, whom, but brief space since,
My hand did burn to put to utter silence.

VIPONT.

I'll move it to him.—Swinton, speak to them,
They lack thy counsel sorely.

SWINTON.

Had I the thousand spears which once I led,
I had not thus been silent. But men's wisdom
Is rated by their means. From the poor leader
Of sixty lances, who seeks words of weight?

GORDON (*steps forward*).

Swinton, there's that of wisdom on thy brow,
And valour in thine eye, and that of peril
In this most urgent hour, that bids me say—
Bids me, thy mortal foe, say—Swinton, speak,
For King and Country's sake!

SWINTON.

Nay, if that voice commands me, speak I will;
It sounds as if the dead lays charge on me.

REGENT.

(*To* LENNOX, *with whom he has been consulting*).

Tis better than you think. This broad hillside
Affords fair compass for our power's display,
Rank above rank rising in seemly tiers;
So that the rearward stands as fair and open——

SWINTON.

As e'er stood mark before an English archer.

REGENT.

Who dares to say so?—Who is't dare impeach
Our rule of discipline?

SWINTON.

A poor Knight of these Marches, good my Lord;
Alan of Swinton, who hath kept a house here,

He and his ancestry, since the old days
Of Malcolm, called the Maiden.

REGENT.

You have brought here, even to this pitched field,
In which the royal Banner is display'd,
I think some sixty spears, Sir Knight of Swinton;
Our musters name no more.

SWINTON.

I brought each man I had; and Chief, or Earl
Thane, Duke, or dignitary, brings no more:
And with them brought I what may here be useful—
An aged eye; which, what in England, Scotland,
Spain, France, and Flanders, hath seen fifty battles,
And ta'en some judgment of them; a stark hand too,
Which plays as with a straw with this same mace—
Which if a young arm here can wield more lightly,
I never more will offer word of counsel.

LENNOX.

Hear him, my Lord; it is the noble Swinton—
He hath had high experience.

MAXWELL.

He is noted
The wisest warrior 'twixt the Tweed and Solway—
I do beseech you, hear him.

JOHNSTONE.

Ay, hear the Swinton—hear stout old Sir Alan;
Maxwell and Johnstone both agree for once.

REGENT.

Where's your impatience now?

Late you were all for battle, would not hear
Ourself pronounce a word—and now you gaze
On yon old warrior, in his antique armour,
As if he were arisen from the dead,
To bring us Bruce's counsel for the battle.

SWINTON.

'Tis a proud word to speak; but he who fought
Long under Robert Bruce, may something guess,
Without communication with the dead,
At what he would have counsell'd.—Bruce had bidden ye
Review your battle-order, marshall'd broadly
Here on the bare hillside, and bidden you mark
Yon clouds of Southron archers, bearing down
To the green meadow-lands which stretch beneath—
The Bruce had warn'd you, not a shaft to-day
But shall find mark within a Scottish bosom,
If thus our field be order'd. The callow boys,
Who draw but four-foot bows, shall gall our front,
While on our mainward, and upon the rear,
The cloth-yard shafts shall fall like death's own darts,
And, though blind men discharge them, find a mark.
Thus shall we die the death of slaughter'd deer,
Which, driven into the toils, are shot at ease
By boys and women, while they toss aloft
All idly and in vain their branchy horns,
As we shall shake our unavailing spears.

REGENT.

Tush, tell not me! If their shot fall like hail,
Our men have Milan coats to bear it out.

SWINTON.

Never did armourer temper steel on stithy
That made sure fence against an English arrow;
A cobweb gossamer were guard as good[1]
Against a wasp-sting.

REGENT.

Who fears a wasp-sting?

SWINTON.

I, my Lord, fear none;
Yet should a wise man brush the insect off,
Or he may smart for it.

REGENT.

We'll keep the hill; it is the vantage ground
When the main battle joins.

SWINTON.

It ne'er will join, while their light archery
Can foil our spearmen and our barbed horse.
To hope Plantagenet would seek close combat
When he can conquer riskless, is to deem
Sagacious Edward simpler than a babe
In battle-knowledge. Keep the hill, my Lord,
With the main body, if it is your pleasure;
But let a body of your chosen horse
Make execution on yon waspish archers.
I've done such work before, and love it well;
If 'tis your pleasure to give me the leading,
The dames of Sherwood, Inglewood, and Weardale,
Shall sit in widowhood and long for venison,

[1] [MS.——"guard as thick."]

And long in vain. Whoe'er remembers Bannock-
burn—
And when shall Scotsman, till the last loud trumpet,
Forget that stirring word!—knows *that* great battle
Even thus was fought and won.

LENNOX.

This is the shortest road to bandy blows;
For when the bills step forth and bows go back,
Then is the moment that our hardy spearmen,
With their strong bodies, and their stubborn hearts,
And limbs well knit by mountain exercise,
At the close tug shall foil the short-breathed Southron.

SWINTON.

I do not say the field will thus be won;
The English host is numerous, brave, and loyal;
Their Monarch most accomplish'd in war's art,
Skill'd, resolute, and wary——

REGENT.

And if your scheme secure not victory,[1]
What does it promise us?

[1] ["The generous abandonment of private dissension, on the part of Gordon, which the historian has described as a momentary impulse, is depicted by the dramatist with great skill and knowledge of human feeling, as the result of many powerful and conflicting emotions. He has, we think, been very successful in his attempt to express the hesitating, and sometimes retrograde movements of a young and ardent mind, in its transition from the first glow of indignation against his hereditary foeman, the mortal antagonist of his father, to the no less warm and generous devotion of feeling which is inspired in it by the contemplation of that foeman's valour and virtues."—*British Critic.*]

SWINTON.

This much at least—
Darkling we shall not die: the peasant's shaft,
Loosen'd perchance without an aim or purpose,
Shall not drink up the life-blood we derive
From those famed ancestors, who made their breasts
This frontier's barrier for a thousand years.
We 'll meet these Southron bravely hand to hand,
And eye to eye, and weapon against weapon;
Each man who falls shall see the foe who strikes him.
While our good blades are faithful to the hilts,
And our good hands to these good blades are faithful,
Blow shall meet blow, and none fall unavenged—
We shall not bleed alone.

REGENT.

And this is all
Your wisdom hath devised?

SWINTON.

Not all; for I would pray you, noble Lords,
(If one, among the guilty guiltiest, might),
For this one day to charm to ten hours' rest
The never-dying worm of deadly feud,
That gnaws our vexed hearts—think no one foe
Save Edward and his host:—days will remain,[1]
Ay, days by far too many will remain,

[1] [MS.—"For this one day to chase our country's curse
From your vex'd bosoms, and think no one enemy
But those in yonder army—days enow,
Ay, days," &c.]

To avenge old feuds or struggles for precedence;—
Let this one day be Scotland's.—For myself,
If there is any here may claim from me
(As well may chance) a debt of blood and hatred,
My life is his to-morrow unresisting,
So he to-day will let me do the best
That my old arm may achieve for the dear country
That's mother to us both.

[GORDON *shews much emotion during this and the preceding speech of* SWINTON.

REGENT.

It is a dream—a vision!—if one troop
Rush down upon the archers, all will follow,
And order is destroy'd—we'll keep the battle-rank
Our fathers wont to do. No more on't.—Ho!
Where be those youths seek knighthood from our sword?

HERALD.

Here are the Gordon, Somerville, and Hay,
And Hepburn, with a score of gallants more.

REGENT.

Gordon, stand forth.

GORDON.

I pray your Grace, forgive me

REGENT.

How! seek you not for knighthood?

GORDON.

I do thirst for't.
But, pardon me—'tis from another sword.

REGENT.

It is your Sovereign's—seek you for a worthier?

GORDON.

Who would drink purely, seeks the secret fountain,
How small soever—not the general stream,
Though it be deep and wide. My Lord, I seek
The boon of knighthood from the honour'd weapon
Of the best knight, and of the sagest leader,
That ever graced a ring of chivalry.
—Therefore, I beg the boon on bended knee,
Even from Sir Alan Swinton. [*Kneels.*

REGENT.

Degenérate boy! Abject at once and insolent!—
See, Lords, he kneels to him that slew his father!

GORDON (*starting up*).

Shame be on him, who speaks such shameful word!
Shame be on him, whose tongue would sow dissension,
When most the time demands that native Scotsmen
Forget each private wrong!

SWINTON (*interrupting him*).

Youth, since you crave me
To be your sire in chivalry, I remind you
War has its duties, Office has its reverence;
Who governs in the Sovereign's name is Sovereign;—
Crave the Lord Regent's pardon.

GORDON.

You task me justly, and I crave his pardon,
[*Bows to the* REGENT.
His and these noble Lords'; and pray them all

Bear witness to my words.—Ye noble presence,
Here I remit unto the Knight of Swinton
All bitter memory of my father's slaughter,
All thoughts of malice, hatred, and revenge;
By no base fear or composition moved,
But by the thought, that in our country's battle
All hearts should be as one. I do forgive him
As freely as I pray to be forgiven,
And once more kneel to him to sue for knighthood.

SWINTON (*affected, and drawing his sword*).

Alas! brave youth, 'tis I should kneel to you,
And, tendering thee the hilt of the fell sword
That made thee fatherless, bid thee use the point
After thine own discretion. For thy boon—
Trumpets be ready—In the Holiest name,
And in Our Lady's and Saint Andrew's name,
[*Touching his shoulder with his sword.*
I dub thee Knight!—Arise, Sir Adam Gordon!
Be faithful, brave, and O, be fortunate,
Should this ill hour permit!

[*The trumpets sound; the Heralds cry*
"Largesse," *and the Attendants shout*
"A Gordon! A Gordon!"

REGENT.

Beggars and flatterers! Peace, peace, I say!
We'll to the Standard; knights shall there be made
Who will with better reason crave your clamour.

LENNOX.

What of Swinton's counsel?
Here's Maxwell and myself think it worth noting

REGENT (*with concentrated indignation*).

Let the best knight, and let the sagest leader—
So Gordon quotes the man who slew his father—
With his old pedigree and heavy mace,
Essay the adventure if it pleases him,
With his fair threescore horse. As for ourselves,
We will not peril aught upon the measure.

GORDON.

Lord Regent, you mistake; for if Sir Alan
Shall venture such attack, each man who calls
The Gordon chief, and hopes or fears from him
Or good or evil, follows Swinton's banner
In this achievement.

REGENT.

Why, God ha' mercy! This is of a piece.
Let young and old e'en follow their own counsel,
Since none will list to mine.

ROSS.

The Border cockerel fain would be on horseback;
'Tis safe to be prepared for fight or flight:
And this comes of it to give Northern lands
To the false Norman blood.

GORDON.

Hearken, proud Chief of Isles! Within my stalls
I have two hundred horse; two hundred riders
Mount guard upon my castle, who would tread
Into the dust a thousand of your Redshanks,
Nor count it a day's service.

SWINTON.

Hear I this
From thee, young man, and on the day of battle?
And to the brave MacDonnell?

GORDON.

'Twas he that urged me; but I am rebuked.

REGENT.

He crouches like a leash-hound to his master![1]

SWINTON.

Each hound must do so that would head the deer—
'Tis mongrel curs that snatch at mate or master.

REGENT.

Too much of this.—Sirs, to the Royal Standard!
I bid you, in the name of good King David.
Sound trumpets—sound for Scotland and King David!

[*The* REGENT *and the rest go off, and the Scene closes. Manent* GORDON, SWINTON, *and* VIPONT, *with* REYNALD *and followers.* LENNOX *follows the* REGENT; *but returns, and addresses* SWINTON.

LENNOX.

O, were my western horsemen but come up,
I would take part with you!

SWINTON.

Better that you remain.
They lack discretion; such gray head as yours
May best supply that want.

[1] [In the MS. this speech and the next are interpolated.]

Lennox, mine ancient friend, and honour'd lord,
Farewell, I think, for ever!

LENNOX.

Farewell, brave friend!—and farewell, noble Gordon,
Whose sun will be eclipsed even as it rises!—
The Regent will not aid you.

SWINTON.

We will so bear us, that as soon the blood-hound
Shall halt, and take no part, what time his comrade
Is grappling with the deer, as he stand still,
And see us overmatch'd.

LENNOX.

Alas! thou dost not know how mean his pride is,
How strong his envy.

SWINTON.

Then we will die, and leave the shame with him.

[*Exit* LENNOX.

VIPONT (*to* GORDON).

What ails thee, noble youth? What means this pause?
Thou dost not rue thy generosity?

GORDON.

I have been hurried on by strong impulse,
Like to a bark that scuds before the storm,
Till driven upon some strange and distant coast,
Which never pilot dream'd of.—Have I not forgiven?
And am I not still fatherless?

SWINTON.

Gordon, no;
For while we live I am a father to thee.

GORDON.

Thou, Swinton?—no!—that cannot, cannot be.

SWINTON.

Then change the phrase, and say, that while we live,
Gordon shall be my son. If thou art fatherless,
Am I not childless too? Bethink thee, Gordon,
Our death-feud was not like the household fire,
Which the poor peasant hides among its embers,
To smoulder on, and wait a time for waking.
Ours was the conflagration of the forest,
Which, in its fury, spares nor sprout nor stem,
Hoar oak, nor sapling—not to be extinguish'd,
Till Heaven, in mercy, sends down all her waters;
But, once subdued, its flame is quench'd for ever;
And spring shall hide the tract of devastation,[1]
With foliage and with flowers.—Give me thy hand.

GORDON.

My hand and heart!—And freely now!—to fight!

VIPONT.

How will you act? [*To* SWINTON.] The Gordon's band and thine
Are in the rearward left, I think, in scorn—
Ill post for them who wish to charge the foremost!

SWINTON.

We 'll turn that scorn to vantage, and descend
Sidelong the hill—some winding path there must be—
O, for a well-skill'd guide!

[1] [MS.—"But, once extinguish'd, it is quench'd for ever,
And spring shall hide the blackness of its ashes."]

HOB HATTELY *starts up from a Thicket.*

HOB.

So here he stands.—An ancient friend, Sir Alan.
Hob Hattely, or, if you like it better,
Hob of the Heron Plume, here stands your guide.

SWINTON.

An ancient friend?—a most notorious knave,
Whose throat I've destined to the dodder'd oak
Before my castle, these ten months and more.
Was it not you who drove from Simprim-mains,
And Swinton-quarter, sixty head of cattle?

HOB.

What then, if now I lead your sixty lances
Upon the English flank, where they 'll find spoil
Is worth six hundred beeves?

SWINTON.

Why, thou can'st do it, knave. I would not trust thee
With one poor bullock; yet would risk my life,
And all my followers, on thine honest guidance.

HOB.

There is a dingle, and a most discreet one,
(I've trod each step by starlight), that sweeps round
The rearward of this hill, and opens secretly
Upon the archers' flank.—Will not that serve
Your present turn, Sir Alan?

SWINTON.

Bravely, bravely!

GORDON.

Mount, sirs, and cry my slogan.
Let all who love the Gordon follow me!

SWINTON.

Ay, let all follow—but in silence follow.
Scare not the hare that 's couchant on her form—
The cushat from her nest—brush not, if possible,
The dewdrop from the spray—
Let no one whisper, until I cry, "Havoc!"
Then shout as loud 's ye will.—On, on, brave Hob;
On, thou false thief, but yet most faithful Scotsman!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A rising Ground immediately in front of the Position of the English Main Body. PERCY, CHANDOS, RIBAUMONT, *and other English and Norman Nobles, are grouped on the Stage.*

PERCY.

The Scots still keep the hill—the sun grows high.
Would that the charge would sound.

CHANDOS.

Thou scent'st the slaughter, Percy.—Who comes here?

[*Enter the* ABBOT OF WALTHAMSTOW.

Now, by my life, the holy priest of Walthamstow,
Like to a lamb among a herd of wolves!
See, he's about to bleat.

ABBOT.

The King, methinks, delays the onset long.

CHANDOS.

Your general, Father, like your rat-catcher,
Pauses to bait his traps, and set his snares.

ABBOT.

The metaphor is decent.

CHANDOS.

Reverend sir,
I will uphold it just. Our good King Edward
Will presently come to this battle-field,
And speak to you of the last tilting-match,
Or of some feat he did a twenty years since;
But not a word of the day's work before him.
Even as the artist, sir, whose name offends you,
Sits prosing o'er his can, until the trap fall,
Announcing that the vermin are secured,
And then 'tis up, and on them.

PERCY.

Chandos, you give your tongue too bold a licence.

CHANDOS.

Percy, I am a necessary evil.
King Edward would not want me, if he could,
And could not, if he would. I know my value.
My heavy hand excuses my light tongue.
So men wear weighty swords in their defence,
Although they may offend the tender shin,
When the steel-boot is doff'd.

ABBOT.

My Lord of Chandos,
This is but idle speech on brink of battle,
When Christian men should think upon their sins;
For as the tree falls, so the trunk must lie,
Be it for good or evil. Lord, bethink thee,

Thou hast withheld from our most reverend house,
The tithes of Evęringham and Settleton;
Wilt thou make satisfaction to the Church
Before her thunders strike thee? I do warn thee
In most paternal sort.

CHANDOS.

I thank you, Father, filially.
Though but a truant son of Holy Church,
I would not choose to undergo her censures,
When Scottish blades are waving at my throat.
I'll make fair composition.

ABBOT.

No composition; I'll have all, or none.

CHANDOS.

None, then—'tis soonest spoke. I'll take my chance,
And trust my sinful soul to Heaven's mercy,
Rather than risk my worldly goods with thee—
My hour may not be come.

ABBOT.

Impious—impenitent—

PERCY.

Hush! the King—the King!

Enter KING EDWARD, *attended by* BALIOL *and others.*

KING (*apart to* CHANDOS).

Hark hither, Chandos!—Have the Yorkshire archers
Yet join'd the vanguard?

CHANDOS.

They are marching thither.

KING EDWARD.

Bid them make haste, for shame—send a quick rider.
The loitering knaves! were it to steal my venison,
Their steps were light enough.—How now, Sir Abbot?
Say, is your Reverence come to study with us
The princely art of war?

ABBOT.

I've had a lecture from my Lord of Chandos,
In which he termed your Grace a rat-catcher.

KING EDWARD.

Chandos, how's this?

CHANDOS.

O, I will prove it, sir!—These skipping Scots
Have changed a dozen times 'twixt Bruce and Baliol,
Quitting each House when it began to totter;
They're fierce and cunning, treacherous, too, as rats,
And we, as such, will smoke them in their fastnesses.

KING EDWARD.

These rats have seen your back, my Lord of Chandos,
And noble Percy's too.

PERCY.

Ay; but the mass which now lies weltering
On yon hillside, like a Leviathan
That's stranded on the shallows, then had soul in 't,
Order and discipline, and power of action.
Now 'tis a headless corpse, which only shews,
By wild convulsions, that some life remains in 't.

KING EDWARD.

True, they had once a head; and 'twas a wise,
Although a rebel head.

ABBOT (*bowing to the* KING).

Would he were here! we should find one to match him.

KING EDWARD.

There's something in that wish which wakes an echo
Within my bosom. Yet it is as well,
Or better, that The Bruce is in his grave.
We have enough of powerful foes on earth,
No need to summon them from other worlds.

PERCY.

Your Grace ne'er met The Bruce?

KING EDWARD.

Never himself; but in my earliest field,
I did encounter with his famous captains,
Douglas and Randolph. Faith! they press'd me hard.

ABBOT.

My Liege, if I might urge you with a question,
Will the Scots fight to-day?

KING EDWARD (*sharply*).

Go look your breviary.

CHANDOS (*apart*).

The Abbot has it—Edward will not answer
On that nice point. We must observe his humour.—
[*Addresses the* KING.
Your first campaign, my Liege?—That was in Weardale,
When Douglas gave our camp yon midnight ruffle,
And turn'd men's beds to biers?

KING EDWARD.

Ay, by Saint Edward!—I escaped right hearly.

I was a soldier then for holidays,
And slept not in mine armour: my safe rest
Was startled by the cry of "Douglas! Douglas!"
And by my couch, a grisly chamberlain,
Stood Alan Swinton, with his bloody mace.
It was a churchman saved me—my stout chaplain,
Heaven quit his spirit! caught a weapon up,
And grappled with the giant.—How now, Louis?

Enter an Officer, who whispers the KING.

KING EDWARD.

Say to him—thus—and thus—— [*Whispers.*

ABBOT.

That Swinton's dead. A monk of ours reported,
Bound homeward from St Ninian's pilgrimage,
The Lord of Gordon slew him.

PERCY.

Father, and if your house stood on our borders,
You might have cause to know that Swinton lives,
And is on horseback yet.

CHANDOS.

He slew the Gordon,
That's all the difference—a very trifle.

ABBOT.

Trifling to those who wage a war more noble
Than with the arm of flesh.

CHANDOS (*apart*).

The Abbot's vexed, I'll rub the sore for him.—
(*Aloud.*) I have seen priests that used that arm of flesh,

And used it sturdily.—Most reverend Father,
What say you to the chaplain's deed of arms
In the King's tent at Weardale?

ABBOT.

It was most sinful, being against the canon
Prohibiting all churchmen to bear weapons;
And as he fell in that unseemly guise,
Perchance his soul may rue it.

KING EDWARD (*overhearing the last words*).

Who may rue?
And what is to be rued?

CHANDOS (*apart*).

I'll match his Reverence for the tithes of Everingham.
—The Abbot says, my Liege, the deed was sinful,
By which your chaplain, wielding secular weapons,
Secured your Grace's life and liberty,
And that he suffers for 't in purgatory.

KING EDWARD (*to the* ABBOT).

Say'st thou my chaplain is in purgatory?

ABBOT.

It is the canon speaks it, good my Liege.

KING EDWARD.

In purgatory! thou shalt pray him out on 't,
Or I will make thee wish thyself beside him.

ABBOT.

My Lord, perchance his soul is past the aid
Of all the church may do—there is a place
From which there 's no redemption.

KING EDWARD.

And if I thought my faithful chaplain there,
Thou shouldst there join him, priest!—Go, watch, fast, pray,
And let me have such prayers as will storm Heaven—
None of your maim'd and mutter'd hunting masses.

ABBOT (*apart to* CHANDOS).

For God's sake, take him off.

CHANDOS.

Wilt thou compound, then,
The tithes of Everingham?

KING EDWARD.

I tell thee, if thou bear'st the keys of Heaven,
Abbot, thou shalt not turn a bolt with them
'Gainst any well-deserving English subject.

ABBOT (*to* CHANDOS).

We will compound, and grant thee, too, a share
I'the next indulgence. Thou dost need it much.
And greatly 'twill avail thee.

CHANDOS.

Enough—we're friends, and when occasion serves,
I will strike in.——

[*Looks as if towards the Scottish Army.*

KING EDWARD.

Answer, proud Abbot; is my chaplain's soul,
If thou knowest aught on't, in the evil place?

CHANDOS.

My Liege, the Yorkshire men have gain'd the meadow.
I see the pennon green of merry Sherwood.

KING EDWARD.

Then give the signal instant! We have lost
But too much time already.

ABBOT.

My Liege, your holy chaplain's blessed soul——

KING EDWARD.

To hell with it and thee! Is this a time
To speak of monks and chaplains?

[*Flourish of Trumpets, answered by a distant sound of Bugles.*

See, Chandos, Percy—Ha, Saint George! Saint Edward!
See it descending now, the fatal hail-shower,
The storm of England's wrath—sure, swift, resistless,
Which no mail-coat can brook.—Brave English hearts!
How close they shoot together!—as one eye
Had aim'd five thousand shafts—as if one hand
Had loosed five thousand bow-strings!

PERCY.

The thick volley
Darkens the air, and hides the sun from us.

KING EDWARD.

It falls on those shall see the sun no more.
The winged, the resistless plague[1] is with them.
How their vex'd host is reeling to and fro,
Like the chafed whale with fifty lances in him,
They do not see, and cannot shun the wound.

[1] [MS.—"The viewless, the resistless plague," &c.]

The storm is viewless, as death's sable wing,
Unerring as his scythe.

PERCY.

Horses and riders are going down together.
'Tis almost pity to see nobles fall,
And by a peasant's arrow.

BALIOL.

I could weep them,
Although they are my rebels.

CHANDOS (*aside to* PERCY).

His conquerors, he means, who cast him out
From his usurped kingdom.—(*Aloud.*) 'Tis the worst of it,
That knights can claim small honour in the field
Which archers win, unaided by our lances.

KING EDWARD.

The battle is not ended. [*Looks towards the field.*
Not ended?—scarce begun! What horse are these,
Rush from the thicket underneath the hill?

PERCY.

They 're Hainaulters, the followers of Queen Isabel.

KING EDWARD (*hastily*).

Hainaulters!—thou art blind—wear Hainaulters
Saint Andrew's silver cross?—or would they charge
Full on our archers, and make havoc of them?—
Bruce is alive again—ho, rescue! rescue!—
Who was 't survey'd the ground?

RIBAUMONT.

Most royal Liege—

KING EDWARD.

A rose hath fallen from thy chaplet,[1] Ribaumont.

RIBAUMONT.

I 'll win it back, or lay my head beside it. [*Exit.*

KING EDWARD.

Saint George! Saint Edward! Gentlemen, to horse,
And to the rescue!—Percy, lead the bill-men;
Chandos, do thou bring up the men-at-arms.—
If yonder numerous host should now bear down
Bold as their vanguard (*to the Abbot*), thou mayst pray for us,
We may need good men's prayers.—To the rescue,
Lords, to the rescue! ha, Saint George! Saint Edward![2]

[*Exeunt.*

[1] The well-known expression by which Robert Bruce censured the negligence of Randolph, for permitting an English body of cavalry to pass his flank on the day preceding the battle of Bannockburn.

[2] ["In the second act, after the English nobles have amused themselves in some trifling conversation with the Abbot of Walthamstow, Edward is introduced; and his proud courageous temper and short manner are very admirably delineated; though, if our historical recollections do not fail us, it is more completely the picture of Longshanks than of the third Edward. . . . . We conceive it to be extremely probable that Sir Walter Scott had resolved to commemorate some of the events in the life of Wallace, and had already sketched that hero, and a Templar, and Edward the First, when his eye glanced over the description of Homildon Hill, in Pinkerton's History of Scotland; that, being pleased with the characters of Swinton and Gordon, he

transferred his Wallace to Swinton; and that, for the sake of retaining his portrait of Edward, as there happened to be a Gordon and a Douglas at the battle of Halidoun in the time of Edward the Third, and there was so much similarity in the circumstances of the contest, he preserved his Edward as Edward the Third, retaining also his old Knight Templar, in defiance of the anachronism."—*Monthly Review*, July, 1822.]

SCENE II.

A part of the Field of Battle betwixt the two Main Armies. Tumults behind the scenes; alarums, and cries of "Gordon, a Gordon," "Swinton," &c.

Enter, as victorious over the English Vanguard, VIPONT, REYNALD, *and others.*

VIPONT.

'Tis sweet to hear these war-cries sound together—
Gordon and Swinton.

REYNALD.

'Tis passing pleasant, yet 'tis strange withal.
Faith, when at first I heard the Gordon's slogan
Sounded so near me, I had nigh struck down
The knave who cried it.[1]

Enter SWINTON *and* GORDON.

SWINTON.

Pitch down my pennon in yon holly bush.

GORDON.

Mine in the thorn beside it; let them wave,
As fought this morn their masters, side by side.

SWINTON.

Let the men rally, and restore their ranks

[1] [The MS. adds—"such was my surprise."]

Here in this vantage-ground—disorder'd chase
Leads to disorder'd flight; we have done our part,
And if we 're succour'd now, Plantagenet
Must turn his bridle southward.—
Reynald, spur to the Regent with the basnet
Of stout De Grey, the leader of their vanguard;
Say, that in battle-front the Gordon slew him,
And by that token bid him send us succour.

GORDON.

And tell him that when Selby's headlong charge
Had wellnigh borne me down, Sir Alan smote him.
I cannot send his helmet, never nutshell
Went to so many shivers.—Harkye, grooms!
[*To those behind the scenes.*
Why do you let my noble steed stand stiffening
After so hot a course?

SWINTON.

Ay, breathe your horses, they 'll have work anon,
For Edward's men-at-arms will soon be on us,
The flower of England, Gascony, and Flanders;
But with swift succour we will bide them bravely.—
De Vipont, thou look'st sad?[1]

[1] ["While thus enjoying a breathing time, Swinton observes the thoughtful countenance of De Vipont. See what follows. Were ever England and Englishmen more nobly, more beautifully, more justly characterised, than by the latter, or was patriotic feeling ever better sustained than by the former and his brave companion in arms?"—*New Edinburgh Review.*]

VIPONT.

It is because I hold a Templar's sword
Wet to the crossed hilt with Christian blood.

SWINTON.

The blood of English archers—what can gild
A Scottish blade more bravely?

VIPONT.

Even therefore grieve I for those gallant yeomen,
England's peculiar and appropriate sons,
Known in no other land. Each boasts his hearth
And field as free as the best lord his barony,
Owing subjection to no human vassalage,
Save to their King and law. Hence are they resolute,
Leading the van on every day of battle,
As men who know the blessings they defend.
Hence are they frank and generous in peace,
As men who have their portion in its plenty.
No other kingdom shews such worth and happiness
Veil'd in such low estate—therefore I mourn them.

SWINTON.

I 'll keep my sorrow for our native Scots,
Who, spite of hardship, poverty, oppression,
Still follow to the field their Chieftain's banner,
And die in the defence on 't.

GORDON.

And if I live and see my halls again,
They shall have portion in the good they fight for.
Each hardy follower shall have his field,
His household hearth and sod-built home, as free

As ever Southron had. They shall be happy!—
And my Elizabeth shall smile to see it!—[1]
I have betrayed myself.

SWINTON.

Do not believe it.—
Vipont, do thou look out from yonder height,
And see what motion in the Scottish host,
And in King Edward's.— [*Exit* VIPONT.
Now will I counsel thee;
The Templar's ear is for no tale of love,
Being wedded to his Order. But I tell thee,
The brave young knight that hath no lady-love
Is like a lamp unlighted; his brave deeds,
And its rich painting, do seem then most glorious,
When the pure ray gleams through them.—
Hath thy Elizabeth no other name?[2]

GORDON.

Must I then speak of her to you, Sir Alan?
The thought of thee, and of thy matchless strength,
Hath conjured phantoms up amongst her dreams.
The name of Swinton hath been spell sufficient

[1] ["There wanted but a little of the tender passion to make this youth every way a hero of romance. But the poem has no ladies. How admirably is this defect supplied! In his enthusiastic anticipation of prosperity, he allows a name to escape him."—*New Edinburgh Review.*]

[2] ["Amid the confusion and din of the battle, the reader is unexpectedly greeted with a dialogue, which breathes indeed the soft sounds of the lute in the clang of trumpets."—*Monthly Review.*]

To chase the rich blood from her lovely cheek,
And wouldst thou now know hers?

SWINTON.

I would, nay must.
Thy father in the paths of chivalry,
Should know the load-star thou dost rule thy course by.

GORDON.

Nay, then, her name is—hark—— [*Whispers.*

SWINTON.

I know it well, that ancient northern house.

GORDON.

O, thou shalt see its fairest grace and honour
In my Elizabeth. And if music touch thee——

SWINTON.

It did, before disasters had untuned me.

GORDON.

O, her notes
Shall hush each sad remembrance to oblivion,
Or melt them to such gentleness of feeling,
That grief shall have its sweetness. Who, but she,
Knows the wild harpings of our native land?
Whether they lull the shepherd on his hill,
Or wake the knight to battle; rouse to merriment,
Or soothe to sadness; she can touch each mood.
Princes and statesmen, chiefs renown'd in arms,
And gray-hair'd bards, contend which shall the first
And choicest homage render to the enchantress.

SWINTON.

You speak her talent bravely.

GORDON.

Though you smile,
I do not speak it half. Her gift creative,
New measures adds to every air she wakes;
Varying and gracing it with liquid sweetness,
Like the wild modulation of the lark;
Now leaving, now returning to the strain!
To listen to her, is to seem to wander
In some enchanted labyrinth of romance,
Whence nothing but the lovely fairy's will,
Who wove the spell, can extricate the wanderer.
Methinks, I hear her now!—

SWINTON.

Bless'd privilege
Of youth! There 's scarce three minutes to decide
'Twixt death and life, 'twixt triumph and defeat,
Yet all his thoughts are in his lady's bower,
List'ning her harping!——

[*Enter* VIPONT.

Where are thine, De Vipont?

VIPONT.

On death—on judgment—on eternity!
For time is over with us.

SWINTON.

There moves not, then, one pennon to our aid,
Of all that flutter yonder!

VIPONT.

From the main English host come rushing forward

Pennons enow—ay, and their Royal Standard.
But ours stand rooted, as for crows to roost on.

SWINTON (*to himself*).

I'll rescue him at least.—Young Lord of Gordon,
Spur to the Regent—shew the instant need——

GORDON.

I penetrate thy purpose; but I go not.

SWINTON.

Not at my bidding? I, thy sire in chivalry—
Thy leader in the battle?—I command thee.

GORDON.

No, thou wilt not command me seek my safety—
For such is thy kind meaning—at the expense
Of the last hope which Heaven reserves for Scotland.
While I abide, no follower of mine
Will turn his rein for life; but were I gone,
What power can stay them? and, our band dispersed,
What swords shall for an instant stem yon host,
And save the latest chance for victory?

VIPONT.

The noble youth speaks truth; and were he gone,
There will not twenty spears be left with us.

GORDON.

No, bravely as we have begun the field,
So let us fight it out. The Regent's eyes,
More certain than a thousand messages,
Shall see us stand, the barrier of his host,
Against yon bursting storm. If not for honour,

If not for warlike rule, for shame at least
He must bear down to aid us.

SWINTON.

Must it be so?
And am I forced to yield the sad consent,
Devoting thy young life?[1] O, Gordon, Gordon!
I do it as the patriarch doom'd his issue;
I at my country's, he at Heaven's command;
But I seek vainly some atoning sacrifice,[2] . . .
Rather than such a victim!—(*Trumpets.*) Hark, they come!
That music sounds not like thy lady's lute.

GORDON.

Yet shall my lady's name mix with it gaily.—
Mount, vassals, couch your lances, and cry, "Gordon!
Gordon for Scotland and Elizabeth!"

[*Exeunt. Loud alarums.*

[1] [MS.—"And am I doom'd to yield the sad consent
That thus devotes thy life?"]

[2] [MS.—"O, could there be some lesser sacrifice."]

SCENE III.

Another part of the Field of Battle, adjacent to the former Scene.

Alarums. *Enter* SWINTON, *followed by* HOB HATTELY.

SWINTON.

Stand to it yet! The man who flies to-day,
May bastards warm them at his household hearth!

HOB HATTELY.

That ne'er shall be my curse. My Magdalen
Is trusty as my broadsword.

SWINTON.

Ha, thou knave,
Art thou dismounted too?

HOB HATTELY.

I know, Sir Alan,
You want no homeward guide; so threw my reins
Upon my palfrey's neck, and let him loose.
Within an hour he stands before my gate;
And Magdalen will need no other token
To bid the Melrose Monks say masses for me.

SWINTON.

Thou art resolved to cheat the halter, then?

HOB HATTELY.

It is my purpose,
Having lived a thief, to die a brave man's death;
And never had I a more glorious chance for 't.

SWINTON.

Here lies the way to it, knave.—Make in, make in,
And aid young Gordon!

[*Exeunt. Loud and long alarums. After which the back Scene rises, and discovers* SWINTON *on the ground,* GORDON *supporting him; both much wounded.*

SWINTON.

All are cut down—the reapers have pass'd o'er us,
And hie to distant harvest.—My toil 's over;
There lies my sickle. [*Dropping his sword.*] Hand of mine again
Shall never, never wield it![1]

GORDON.

O valiant leader, is thy light extinguish'd!
That only beacon-flame which promised safety
In this day's deadly wrack!

SWINTON.

My lamp hath long been dim. But thine, young Gordon,
Just kindled, to be quench'd so suddenly,
Ere Scotland saw its splendour!——

[1] [This speech of Swinton's is interpolated on the blank page of the manuscript.]

GORDON.

Five thousand horse hung idly on yon hill,
Saw us o'erpower'd, and no one stirr'd to aid us!

SWINTON.

It was the Regent's envy.—Out!—alas!
Why blame I him!—It was our civil discord,
Our selfish vanity, our jealous hatred,
Which framed this day of dole for our poor country.—
Had thy brave father held yon leading staff,
As well his rank and valour might have claim'd it,
We had not fall'n unaided.—How, O how
Is he to answer it, whose deed prevented——

GORDON.

Alas! alas! the author of the death-feud,
He has his reckoning too! for had your sons
And num'rous vassals lived, we had lack'd no aid.

SWINTON.

May God assoil the dead, and him who follows!
We 've drank the poison'd beverage which we brew'd:
Have sown the wind, and reap'd the tenfold whirlwind!—
But thou, brave youth, whose nobleness of heart
Pour'd oil upon the wounds our hate inflicted;
Thou, who hast done no wrong, need'st no forgiveness—
Why shouldst thou share our punishment!

GORDON.

All need forgiveness—[*distant alarum.*]——Hark, in yonder shout
Did the main battles counter!

SWINTON.

Look on the field, brave Gordon, if thou canst,
And tell me how the day goes.—But I guess,
Too surely do I guess——

GORDON.

All 's lost! all 's lost!—Of the main Scottish host,
Some wildly fly, and some rush wildly forward;
And some there are who seem to turn their spears
Against their countrymen.

SWINTON.

Rashness, and cowardice, and secret treason,
Combine to ruin us; and our hot valour,
Devoid of discipline, is madmen's strength,
More fatal unto friends than enemies!
I 'm glad that these dim eyes shall see no more on 't.—
Let thy hands close them, Gordon—I will dream
My fair-hair'd William renders me that office!

[*Dies.*

GORDON.

And, Swinton, I will think I do that duty
To my dead father.

Enter DE VIPONT.

VIPONT.

Fly, fly, brave youth!—A handful of thy followers,
The scatter'd gleaning of this desperate day,
Still hover yonder to essay thy rescue.—
O linger not!—I 'll be your guide to them.

GORDON.

Look there, and bid me fly!—The oak has fall'n;

And the young ivy bush, which learn'd to climb
By its support, must needs partake its fall.

VIPONT.

Swinton? Alas!, the best, the bravest, strongest,
And sagest of our Scottish chivalry!
Forgive one moment, if to save the living,
My tongue should wrong the dead.—Gordon, bethink thee,
Thou dost but stay to perish with the corpse[1]
Of him who slew thy father.

GORDON.

Ay, but he was my sire in chivalry.
He taught my youth to soar above the promptings
Of mean and selfish vengeance; gave my youth
A name that shall not die even on this death-spot.
Records shall tell this field had not been lost,
Had all men fought like Swinton and like Gordon.
[*Trumpets.*
Save thee, De Vipont.—Hark! the Southron trumpets.

VIPONT.

Nay, without thee I stir not.

Enter EDWARD, CHANDOS, PERCY, BALIOL, *&c.*

GORDON.

Ay, they come on—the Tyrant and the Traitor,
Workman and tool, Plantagenet and Baliol.—

[1] [MS.—"Thou hast small cause to tarry with the corpse."]

O for a moment's strength in this poor arm,
To do one glorious deed!

[*He rushes on the English, but is made prisoner with* VIPONT.

KING EDWARD.

Disarm them—harm them not; though it was they
Made havoc on the archers of our vanguard,
They and that bulky champion. Where is he?

CHANDOS.

Here lies the giant! Say his name, young Knight?

GORDON.

Let it suffice, he was a man this morning.[1]

CHANDOS.

I question'd thee in sport. I do not need
Thy information, youth. Who that has fought
Through all these Scottish wars, but knows his crest,
The sable boar chain'd to the leafy oak,
And that huge mace still seen where war was wildest!

KING EDWARD.

'Tis Alan Swinton!
Grim chamberlain, who in my tent at Weardale,

[1] [In his narrative of events on the day after the battle of Sheriffmuir, Sir Walter Scott says, "Amongst the gentlemen who fell on this occasion, were several on both sides, alike eminent for birth and character. The body of the gallant young Earl of Strathmore was found on the field, watched by a faithful old domestic, who, being asked the name of the person whose body he waited upon with so much care, made this striking reply, 'He was a man yesterday.'"—*Tales of a Grandfather*, Third Series, vol. ii. p. 46.]

Stood by my startled couch[1] with torch and mace,
When the Black Douglas' war-cry waked my camp.

GORDON (*sinking down*).

If thus thou know'st him,
Thou wilt respect his corpse.[2]

KING EDWARD.

As belted Knight and crowned King, I will.

GORDON.

And let mine
Sleep at his side, in token that our death
Ended the feud of Swinton and of Gordon.

KING EDWARD.

It is the Gordon!—Is there aught beside
Edward can do to honour bravery,
Even in an enemy?

[1] [MS.—"Stood arm'd beside my couch," &c.]

[2] ["The character of Swinton is obviously a favourite with the author, to which circumstance we are probably indebted for the strong relief in which it is given, and the perfect verisimilitude which belongs to it. The stately commanding figure of the veteran warrior, whom, by the illusion of his art, the author has placed in veritable presentment before us;—his venerable age, superior prowess, and intuitive decision;—the broils in which he had engaged, the misfortunes he had suffered, and the intrepid fortitude with which he sustained them—together with that rigorous control of temper, not to be shaken even by unmerited contumely and insult;—these qualities, grouped and embodied in one and the same character, render it morally impossible that we should not at once sympathise and admire. The inherent force of his character is finely illustrated in the effect produced upon Lord Gordon by the first appearance of the man 'who had made him fatherless.'"—*Edinburgh Magazine*, July, 1822.]

GORDON.

Nothing but this:
Let not base Baliol, with his touch or look,
Profane my corpse or Swinton's. I've some breath still,
Enough to say—Scotland—Elizabeth! [*Dies.*

CHANDOS.

Baliol, I would not brook such dying looks,
To buy the crown you aim at.

KING EDWARD (*to* VIPONT).

Vipont, thy crossed shield shews ill in warfare
Against a Christian king.

VIPONT.

That Christian King is warring upon Scotland.
I was a Scotsman ere I was a Templar,[1]
Sworn to my country ere I knew my order.

KING EDWARD.

I will but know thee as a Christian champion,
And set thee free unransom'd.

Enter ABBOT OF WALTHAMSTOW.

ABBOT.

Heaven grant your Majesty
Many such glorious days as this has been!

[1] A Venetian general observing his soldiers testified some unwillingness to fight against those of the Pope, whom they regarded as father of the Church, addressed them in terms of similar encouragement—"Fight on! we were Venetians before we were Christians."

KING EDWARD.

It is a day of much and high advantage;
Glorious it might have been, had all our foes
Fought like these two brave champions.—Strike the drums,
Sound trumpets, and pursue the fugitives,
Till the Tweed's eddies whelm them. Berwick's render'd—
These wars, I trust, will soon find lasting close.[1]

[1] ["It is generally the case that much expectation ends in disappointment. The free delineation of character in some of the recent Scottish Novels, and the admirable conversations interspersed throughout them, raised hopes that, when a regular drama should be attempted by the person who was considered as their author, the success would be eminent. Its announcement, too, in a solemn and formal manner, did not diminish the interest of the public. The drama, however, which was expected, turns out to be in fact, and not only in name, merely a dramatic sketch, which is entirely deficient in plot, and contains but three characters, Swinton, Gordon, and Edward, in whom any interest is endeavoured to be excited. With some exceptions, the dialogue also is flat and coarse; and for all these defects, one or two vigorous descriptions of battle-scenes, will scarcely make sufficient atonement, except in the eyes of very enthusiastic friends."—*Monthly Review.*

"Halidon Hill, we understand, unlike the earlier poems of its author, has not been received into the ranks of popular favour. Such rumours, of course, have no effect on our critical judgment; but we cannot forbear saying, that, thinking as we do very highly of the spirit and taste with which an interesting tale is here sketched in natural and energetic verse, we are yet far from

feeling surprised that the approbation, which it is our pleasing duty to bestow, should not have been anticipated by the ordinary readers of the work before us. It bears, in truth, no great resemblance to the narrative poems from which Sir Walter Scott derived his first and high reputation, and by which, *for the present*, his genius must be characterised. It is wholly free from many of their most obvious faults—their carelessness, their irregularity, and their inequality both of conception and of execution; but it wants likewise no inconsiderable portion of their beauties—it has less 'pomp and circumstance,' less picturesque description, romantic association, and chivalrous glitter, less sentiment and reflection, less perhaps of all their striking charms, with the single exception of that one redeeming and sufficing quality, which forms, in our view, the highest recommendation of *all* the author's works of imagination, their unaffected and unflagging VIGOUR. This perhaps, after all, is only saying, that we have before us a dramatic poem, instead of a metrical tale of romance, and that the author has had too much taste and discretion to bedizen his scenes with inappropriate and encumbering ornament. There is, however, a class of readers of poetry, and a pretty large class, too, who have no relish for a work, however naturally and strongly the characters and incidents may be conceived and sustained—however appropriate and manly may be the imagery and diction—from which they cannot select any isolated passages to store in their memories or their commonplace-books, to whisper into a lady's ear, or transcribe into a lady's album. With this tea-table and watering-place school of critics, 'Halidon Hill' must expect no favour; it has no rant—no mysticism—and, worst offence of all, no affectation."—*British Critic*, October, 1822.]

END OF HALIDON HILL.

MACDUFF'S CROSS.

TO

MRS JOANNA BAILLIE,

AUTHORESS OF

"THE PLAYS ON THE PASSIONS."

INTRODUCTION.

THESE few scenes had the honour to be included in a Miscellany, published in the year 1823, by Mrs Joanna Baillie, and are here reprinted, to unite them with the trifles of the same kind which owe their birth to the author. The singular history of the Cross and Law of Clan MacDuff is given, at length enough to satisfy the keenest antiquary, in *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*.[1] It is here only necessary to state, that the Cross was a place of refuge to any person related to MacDuff, within the ninth degree, who, having committed homicide in sudden quarrel, should reach this place, prove his descent from the Thane of Fife, and pay a certain penalty.

[1] [See vol. iv. *ante*, in the Appendix to Lord Soulis, "Law of Clan MacDuff," p. 266.]

The shaft of the Cross was destroyed at the Reformation. The huge block of stone which served for its pedestal is still in existence near the town of Newburgh, on a kind of pass which commands the county of Fife to the southward, and to the north, the windings of the magnificent Tay and fertile country of Angus-shire. The Cross bore an inscription, which is transmitted to us in an untelligible form by Sir Robert Sibbald.

ABBOTSFORD, *January* 1830.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

NINIAN, WALDHAVE, } *Monks of Lindores.*

LINDESAY, MAURICE BERKELEY, } *Scottish Barons.*

PRELUDE.

NAY, smile not, Lady, when I speak of witchcraft,
And say, that still there lurks amongst our glens
Some touch of strange enchantment.—Mark that fragment,
I mean that rough-hewn block of massive stone,
Placed on the summit of this mountain-pass,
Commanding prospect wide o'er field and fell,
And peopled village and extended moorland,
And the wide ocean and majestic Tay,
To the far distant Grampians.—Do not deem it
A loosen'd portion of the neighbouring rock,
Detach'd by storm and thunder—'twas the pedestal
On which, in ancient times, a Cross was rear'd,
Carved o'er with words which foil'd philologists;
And the events it did commemorate
Were dark, remote and undistinguishable,
As were the mystic characters it bore.
But, mark—a wizard born on Avon's bank,
Tuned but his harp to this wild northern theme,

And, lo! the scene is hallow'd. None shall pass,
Now or in after days, beside that stone,
But he shall have strange visions; thoughts and words
That shake, or rouse, or thrill the human heart,
Shall rush upon his memory when he hears
The spirit-stirring name of this rude symbol;—
Oblivious ages, at that simple spell,
Shall render back their terrors with their woes,
Alas! and with their crimes—and the proud phantoms
Shall move with step familiar to his eye,
And accents which, once heard, the ear forgets not,
Though ne'er again to list them. Siddons, thine,
Thou matchless Siddons! thrill upon our ear;
And on our eye thy lofty Brother's form
Rises as Scotland's monarch.—But, to thee,
Joanna, why to thee speak of such visions?
Thine own wild wand can raise them.

Yet since thou wilt an idle tale of mine,
Take one which scarcely is of worth enough
To give or to withhold.—Our time creeps on,
Fancy grows colder as the silvery hair
Tells the advancing winter of our life.
But if it be of worth enough to please,
That worth it owes to her who set the task;
If otherwise, the fault rests with the author.

MACDUFF'S CROSS.

SCENE I.

The summit of a Rocky Pass near to Newburgh, about two miles from the ancient Abbey of Lindores, in Fife. In the centre is MacDuff's Cross, an antique Monument; and, at a small distance, on one side, a Chapel, with a Lamp burning.

Enter, as having ascended the Pass, NINIAN *and* WALDHAVE, *Monks of Lindores.* NINIAN *crosses himself, and seems to recite his devotions—*WALDHAVE *stands gazing on the prospect, as if in deep contemplation.*

NINIAN.

Here stands the Cross, good brother, consecrated
By the bold Thane unto his patron saint
Magridius, once a brother of our house.
Canst thou not spare an ave or a creed?

Or hath the steep ascent exhausted you?
You trode it stoutly, though 'twas rough and toilsome.

WALDHAVE.

I have trode a rougher.

NINIAN.

On the Highland hills—
Scarcely within our sea-girt province here,
Unless upon the Lomonds or Bennarty.

WALDHAVE.

I spoke not of the literal path, good father,
But of the road of life which I have travell'd,
Ere I assumed this habit; it was bounded,
Hedged in, and limited by earthly prospects,
As ours beneath was closed by dell and thicket.
Here we see wide and far, and the broad sky,
With wide horizon, opens full around,
While earthly objects dwindle. Brother Ninian,
Fain would I hope that mental elevation
Could raise me equally o'er worldly thoughts,
And place me nearer heaven.

NINIAN.

'Tis good morality.—But yet forget not,
That though we look on heaven from this high eminence,
Yet doth the Prince of all the airy space,
Arch foe of man, possess the realms between.

WALDHAVE.

Most true, good brother; and men may be farther

From the bright heaven they aim at, even because
They deem themselves secure on't.

NINIAN (*after a pause*).

You do gaze—
Strangers are wont to do so—on the prospect.
Yon is the Tay roll'd down from Highland hills,
That rests his waves, after so rude a race,
In the fair plains of Gowrie—further westward,
Proud Stirling rises—yonder to the east,
Dundee, the gift of God, and fair Montrose,
And still more northward lie the ancient towers——

WALDHAVE.

Of Edzell.

NINIAN.

How? know you the towers of Edzell?

WALDHAVE.

I've heard of them.

NINIAN.

Then have you heard a tale,
Which when he tells, the peasant shakes his head,
And shuns the mouldering and deserted walls.

WALDHAVE.

Why, and by whom, deserted?

NINIAN.

Long the tale—
Enough to say that the last Lord of Edzell,
Bold Louis Lindesay, had a wife, and found——

WALDHAVE.

Enough is said, indeed—since a weak woman,

Ay, and a tempting fiend, lost Paradise,
When man was innocent.

NINIAN.

They fell at strife,
Men say, on slight occasion: that fierce Lindesay
Did bend his sword against De Berkeley's breast,
And that the lady threw herself between:
That then De Berkeley dealt the Baron's death-wound.
Enough, that from that time De Berkeley bore
A spear in foreign wars. But, it is said,
He hath return'd of late; and, therefore, brother,
The Prior hath ordain'd our vigil here,
To watch the privilege of the sanctuary,
And rights of Clan MacDuff.

WALDHAVE.

What rights are these?

NINIAN.

Most true! you are but newly come from Rome,
And do not know our ancient usages.
Know then, when fell Macbeth beneath the arm
Of the predestined knight, unborn of woman,
Three boons the victor ask'd, and thrice did Malcolm,
Stooping the sceptre by the Thane restored,
Assent to his request. And hence the rule,
That first when Scotland's King assumes the crown,
MacDuff's descendant rings his brow with it:
And hence, when Scotland's King calls forth his host,
MacDuff's descendant leads the van in battle:

And last, in guerdon of the crown restored,
Red with the blood of the usurping tyrant,
The right was granted in succeeding time,
That if a kinsman of the Thane of Fife
Commit a slaughter on a sudden impulse,
And fly for refuge to this Cross MacDuff,
For the Thane's sake he shall find sanctuary;
For here must the avenger's step be staid,
And here the panting homicide find safety.

WALDHAVE.

And here a brother of your order watches,
To see the custom of the place observed?—

NINIAN.

Even so;—such is our convent's holy right,
Since Saint Magridius—blessed be his memory!—
Did by a vision warn the Abbot Eadmir.—
And chief we watch, when there is bickering
Among the neighbouring nobles, now most likely
From this return of Berkeley from abroad,
Having the Lindesay's blood upon his hand.

WALDHAVE.

The Lindesay, then, was loved among his friends?

NINIAN.

Honour'd and fear'd he was—but little loved;
For even his bounty bore a show of sternness;
And when his passions waked, he was a Sathan
Of wrath and injury.

WALDHAVE.

How now, Sir Priest! (*fiercely*)—Forgive me (*recollecting himself*)—I was dreaming

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Of an old baron, who did bear about him
Some touch of your Lord Reynold.

NINIAN.

Lindesay's name, my brother,
Indeed was Reynold;—and methinks, moreover,
That, as you spoke even now, he would have spoken.
I brought him a petition from our convent:
He granted straight, but in such tone and manner,
By my good saint! I thought myself scarce safe
Till Tay roll'd broad between us. I must now
Unto the chapel—meanwhile the watch is thine;
And, at thy word, the hurrying fugitive,
Should such arrive, must here find sanctuary;
And, at thy word, the fiery-paced avenger
Must stop his bloody course—e'en as swoln Jordan
Controll'd his waves, soon as they touch'd the feet
Of those who bore the ark.

WALDHAVE.

Is this my charge?

NINIAN.

Even so;—and I am near, should chance require me.
At midnight I relieve you on your watch,
When we my taste together some refreshment:
I have cared for it; and for a flask of wine—
There is no sin, so that we drink it not
Until the midnight hour, when lauds have toll'd.
Farewell a while, and peaceful watch be with you!

[*Exit towards the chapel.*

WALDHAVE.

It is not with me, and alas! alas!
I know not where to seek it.—This monk's mind
Is with his cloister match'd, nor lacks more room.
Its petty duties, formal ritual,
Its humble pleasures and its paltry troubles,
Fill up his round of life; even as some reptiles,
They say, are moulded to the very shape,
And all the angles of the rocky crevice,
In which they live and die. But for myself,
Retired in passion to the narrow cell,
Couching my tired limbs in its recesses,
So ill adapted am I to its limits,
That every attitude is agony.——
How now! what brings him back?

Re-enter NINIAN.

NINIAN.

Look to your watch, my brother;—horsemen come
I heard their tread when kneeling in the chapel.

WALDHAVE (*looking to a distance*).

My thoughts have rapt me more than thy devotion,
Else had I heard the tread of distant horses
Farther than thou couldst hear the sacring-bell;
But now in truth they come:—flight and pursuit
Are sights I 've been long strange to.

NINIAN.

See how they gallop down the opposing hill!
Yon gray steed bounding down the headlong path,

As on the level meadow; while the black,
Urged by the rider with his naked sword,
Stoops on his prey, as I have seen the falcon
Dashing upon the heron.—Thou dost frown
And clench thy hand, as if it grasp'd a weapon?

WALDHAVE.

'Tis but for shame to see a man fly thus
While only one pursues him.—Coward, turn!—
Turn thee, I say! thou art as stout as he,
And well mayst match thy single sword with his—
Shame, that a man should rein a steed like thee,
Yet fear to turn his front against a foe!—
I am ashamed to look on them.

NINIAN.

Yet look again—they quit their horses now,
Unfit for the rough path:—the fugitive
Keeps the advantage still.—They strain towards us.

WALDHAVE.

I'll not believe that ever the bold Thane
Rear'd up his Cross to be a sanctuary
To the base coward, who shunn'd an equal combat.—
How's this?—that look—that mien—mine eyes grow dizzy!—

NINIAN.

He comes:—thou art a novice on this watch:—
Brother, I'll take the word and speak to him.
Pluck down thy cowl;—know, that we spiritual champions

Have honour to maintain, and must not seem
To quail before the laity.

[WALDHAVE *lets down his cowl, and steps back.*

Enter MAURICE BERKELEY.

NINIAN.

Who art thou, stranger? speak thy name and purpose.

BERKELEY.

I claim the privilege of Clan MacDuff.
My name is Maurice Berkeley, and my lineage
Allies me nearly with the Thane of Fife.

NINIAN.

Give us to know the cause of sanctuary?

BERKELEY.

Let him shew it,
Against whose violence I claim the privilege.

Enter LINDESAY, *with his sword drawn. He rushes at* BERKELEY; NINIAN *interposes.*

NINIAN.

Peace, in the name of Saint Magridius!
Peace, in our Prior's name, and in the name
Of that dear symbol, which did purchase peace
And good-will towards man! I do command thee
To sheathe thy sword, and stir no contest here.

LINDESAY.

One charm I'll try first,

To lure the craven from the enchanted circle
Which he hath harbour'd in.—Hear you, De Berkeley,
This is my brother's sword—the hand it arms
Is weapon'd to avenge a brother's death :—
If thou hast heart to step a furlong off,
And change three blows—even for so short a space
As these good men may say an ave-marie—
So, Heaven be good to me ! I will forgive thee
Thy deed and all its consequences.

BERKELEY.

Were not my right hand fetter'd by the thought
That slaying thee were but a double guilt
In which to steep my soul, no bridegroom ever
Stepp'd forth to trip a measure with his bride
More joyfully than I, young man, would rush
To meet thy challenge.

LINDESAY.

He quails, and shuns to look upon my weapon,
Yet boasts himself a Berkeley!

BERKELEY.

Lindesay, and if there were no deeper cause
For shunning thee than terror of thy weapon,
That rock-hewn Cross as soon should start and stir,
Because a shepherd-boy blew horn beneath it,
As I for brag of thine.

NINIAN.

I charge you both, and in the name of Heaven,
Breathe no defiance on this sacred spot,
Where Christian men must bear them peacefully,

On pain of the Church thunders. Calmly tell
Your cause of difference; and, Lord Lindesay, thou
Be first to speak them.

LINDESAY.

Ask the blue welkin—ask the silver Tay,
The northern Grampians—all things know my wrongs;
But ask not me to tell them, while the villain,
Who wrought them, stands and listens with a smile.

NINIAN.

It is said—
Since you refer us thus to general fame—
That Berkeley slew thy brother, the Lord Louis,
In his own halls at Edzell——

LINDESAY.

Ay, in his halls—
In his own halls, good father, that 's the word.
In his own halls he slew him, while the wine
Pass'd on the board between! The gallant Thane,
Who wreak'd Macbeth's inhospitable murder,
Rear'd not yon Cross to sanction deeds like these.

BERKELEY.

Thou say'st I came a guest!—I came a victim,
A destined victim, train'd on to the doom
His frantic jealousy prepared for me.
He fix'd a quarrel on me, and we fought.
Can I forget the form that came between us,
And perish'd by his sword? 'Twas then I fought
For vengeance—until then I guarded life,
But then I sought to take it, and prevail'd.

LINDESAY.

Wretch! thou didst first dishonour to thy victim,
And then didst slay him!

BERKELEY.

There is a busy fiend tugs at my heart,
But I will struggle with it!—Youthful knight,
My heart is sick of war, my hand of slaughter;
I come not to my lordships, or my land,
But just to seek a spot in some cold cloister,
Which I may kneel on living, and, when dead,
Which may suffice to cover me.
Forgive me that I caused your brother's death;
And I forgive thee the injurious terms
With which thou taxest me.

LINDESAY.

Take worse and blacker.—Murderer, adulterer!—
Art thou not moved yet?

BERKELEY.

Do not press me further.
The hunted stag, even when he seeks the thicket,
Compell'd to stand at bay, grows dangerous!
Most true thy brother perish'd by my hand,
And if you term it murder—I must bear it.
Thus far my patience can; but if thou brand
The purity of yonder martyr'd saint,
Whom then my sword but poorly did avenge,
With one injurious word, come to the valley,
And I will shew thee how it shall be answer'd!

NINIAN.

This heat, Lord Berkeley, doth but ill accord
With thy late pious patience.

BERKELEY.

Father, forgive, and let me stand excused
To Heaven and thee, if patience brooks no more.
I loved this lady fondly—truly loved—
Loved her, and was beloved, ere yet her father
Conferr'd her on another. While she lived,
Each thought of her was to my soul as hallow'd
As those I send to Heaven; and on her grave,
Her bloody, early grave, while this poor hand
Can hold a sword, shall no one cast a scorn.

LINDESAY.

Follow me. Thou shalt hear me call the adulteress
By her right name.—I 'm glad there 's yet a spur
Can rouse thy sluggard mettle.

BERKELEY.

Make then obeisance to the blessed Cross,
For it shall be on earth thy last devotion.

[*They are going off.*

WALDHAVE (*rushing forward*).

Madmen, stand!—
Stay but one second—answer but one question.—
There, Maurice Berkeley, can'st thou look upon
That blessed sign, and swear thou 'st spoken truth?

BERKELEY.

I swear by Heaven,
And by the memory of that murder'd innocent,

Each seeming charge against her was as false
As our bless'd Lady's spotless. Hear, each saint!
Hear me, thou holy rood! hear me from heaven,
Thou martyr'd excellence!—Hear me from penal fire,
(For sure not yet thy guilt is expiated!)
Stern ghost of her destroyer!——

WALDHAVE (*throws back his cowl*).

He hears! he hears! Thy spell hath raised the dead.

LINDESAY.

My brother! and alive!—

WALDHAVE.

Alive—but yet, my Richard, dead to thee,
No tie of kindred binds me to the world;
All were renounced, when, with reviving life,
Came the desire to seek the sacred cloister.
Alas, in vain! for to that last retreat,
Like to a pack of blood-hounds in full chase,
My passion and my wrongs have follow'd me,
Wrath and remorse—and, to fill up the cry,
Thou hast brought vengeance hither.

LINDESAY.

I but sought
To do the act and duty of a brother.

WALDHAVE.

I ceased to be so when I left the world;
But if he can forgive as I forgive,
God sends me here a brother in mine enemy,
To pray for me and with me. If thou canst,
De Berkeley, give thine hand.—

BERKELEY (*gives his hand*).
It is the will
Of Heaven, made manifest in thy preservation,
To inhibit farther bloodshed; for De Berkeley,
The votary Maurice lays the title down.
Go to his halls, Lord Richard, where a maiden,
Kin to his blood, and daughter in affection,
Heirs his broad lands;—If thou canst love her, Lindesay,
Woo her and be successful.

END OF MACDUFF'S CROSS

THE

DOOM OF DEVORGOIL.

PREFACE.

THE first of these dramatic pieces was long since written, for the purpose of obliging the late Mr Terry, then Manager of the Adelphi Theatre, for whom the Author had a particular regard. The manner in which the mimic goblins of Devorgoil are intermixed with the supernatural machinery, was found to be objectionable, and the production had other faults, which rendered it unfit for representation.[1] I have called the piece a Melodrama, for want of a better name; but, as I learn from the unquestionable authority of Mr Colman's *Random*

[1] [Mr Daniel Terry, the comedian, distinguished for a very peculiar style of humour on the stage, and, moreover, by personal accomplishments of various sorts not generally shared by members of his profession, was, during many years, on terms of intimacy with Sir Walter Scott. He died 22d June 1829.]

Records, that one species of the drama is termed an *extravaganza*, I am sorry I was not sooner aware of a more appropriate name than that which I had selected for Devorgoil.

The Author's Publishers thought it desirable, that the scenes, long condemned to oblivion, should be united to similar attempts of the same kind; and as he felt indifferent on the subject, they are printed in the same volume with Halidon Hill and MacDuff's Cross, and thrown off in a separate form, for the convenience of those who possess former editions of the Author's Poetical Works.

The general story of the Doom of Devorgoil is founded on an old Scottish tradition, the scene of which lies in Galloway. The crime supposed to have occasioned the misfortunes of this devoted house, is similar to that of a Lord Herries of Hoddam Castle, who is the principal personage of Mr Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe's interesting ballad, in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. iv., p. 307. In remorse for his crime, he built the singular monument called the Tower of Repentance. In many cases the Scottish superstitions allude to the fairies, or those who, for sins of a milder

description, are permitted to wander with the "rout that never rest," as they were termed by Dr Leyden. They imitate human labour and human amusements, but their toil is useless, and without any advantageous result; and their gaiety is unsubstantial and hollow. The phantom of Lord Erick is supposed to be a spectre of this character.

The story of the Ghostly Barber is told in many countries; but the best narrative founded on the passage, is the tale called Stumme Liebe, among the legends of Musæus. I think it has been introduced upon the English stage in some pantomime, which was one objection to bringing it upon the scene a second time.

Abbotsford, *April* 1830.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

OSWALD OF DEVORGOIL, *a decayed Scottish Baron.*
LEONARD, *a Ranger.*
DURWARD, *a Palmer.*
LANCELOT BLACKTHORN, *a Companion of Leonard, in love with Katleen.*
GULLCRAMMER, *a conceited Student.*
OWLSPIEGLE *and* COCKLEDEMOY, *Maskers, represented by Blackthorn and Flora.*
SPIRIT OF LORD ERICK OF DEVORGOIL.
Peasants, Shepherds, and Vassals of inferior rank.

ELEANOR, *Wife of Oswald, descended of obscure Parentage.*
FLORA, *Daughter of Oswald.*
KATLEEN, *Niece of Eleanor.*

THE

DOOM OF DEVORGOIL.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

The Scene represents a wild and hilly, but not a mountainous Country, in a frontier District of Scotland. The flat Scene exhibits the Castle of Devorgoil, decayed, and partly ruinous, situated upon a Lake, and connected with the Land by a Drawbridge, which is lowered. Time—Sunset.

FLORA *enters from the Castle, looks timidly around, then comes forward and speaks.*

He is not here—those pleasures are not ours
Which placid evening brings to all things else.

SONG.[1]

The sun upon the lake is low,
The wild birds hush their song,
The hills have evening's deepest glow,
Yet Leonard tarries long.
Now all whom varied toil and care
From home and love divide,
In the calm sunset may repair
Each to the loved one's side.

The noble dame, on turret high,
Who waits her gallant knight,
Looks to the western beam to spy
The flash of armour bright.
The village maid, with hand on brow,
The level ray to shade,
Upon the footpath watches now
For Colin's darkening plaid.

Now to their mates the wild swans row
By day they swam apart,
And to the thicket wanders slow
The hind beside the hart.
The woodlark at his partner's side,
Twitters his closing song—
All meet whom day and care divide,
But Leonard tarries long.

[KATLEEN *has come out of the Castle while* FLORA *was singing, and speaks when the song is ended.*

[1] The author thought of omitting this song, which was, in fact, abridged into one in *Quentin Durward*, termed County Guy. It seemed, however, necessary to the sense that the original stanzas should be retained here.

KATLEEN.

Ah, my dear coz!—if that your mother's niece
May so presume to call your father's daughter—
All these fond things have got some home of comfort
To tempt their rovers back—the lady's bower,
The sheperdess's hut, the wild swan's couch
Among the rushes, even the lark's low nest,
Has that of promise which lures home a lover,
But we have nought of this.

FLORA.

How call you, then, this castle of my sire,
The towers of Devorgoil?

KATLEEN.

Dungeons for men, and palaces for owls;
Yet no wise owl would change a farmer's barn
For yonder hungry hall—our latest mouse,
Our last of mice, I tell you, has been found
Starved in the pantry; and the reverend spider,
Sole living tenant of the Baron's halls,
Who, train'd to abstinence, lived a whole summer
Upon a single fly, he's famish'd too;
The cat is in the kitchen-chimney seated
Upon our last of fagots, destined soon
To dress our last of suppers, and, poor soul,
Is starved with cold, and mewling mad with hunger.

FLORA.

D'ye mock our misery, Katleen?

KATLEEN.

No, but I am hysteric on the subject,
So I must laugh or cry, and laughing's lightest.

FLORA.

Why stay you with us, then, my merry cousin?
From you my sire can ask no filial duty.

KATLEEN.

No! thanks to Heaven,
No noble in wide Scotland, rich or poor,
Can claim an interest in the vulgar blood
That dances in my veins; and I might wed
A forester to-morrow, nothing fearing
The wrath of high-born kindred, and far less
That the dry bones of lead-lapp'd ancestors
Would clatter in their cerements at the tidings.

FLORA.

My mother, too, would gladly see you placed
Beyond the verge of our unhappiness,[1]
Which, like a witch's circle, blights and taints
Whatever comes within it.

KATLEEN.

Ah! my good aunt!
She is a careful kinswoman, and prudent,
In all but marrying a ruin'd baron,
When she could take her choice of honest yeomen;
And now, to balance this ambitious error,
She presses on her daughter's love the suit

[1] [MS.—"Beyond the circle of our wretchedness."]

Of one, who hath no touch of nobleness,
In manners, birth, or mind, to recommend him—
Sage Master Gullcrammer, the new-dubb'd preacher.

FLORA.

Do not name him Katleen!

KATLEEN.

Ay, but I must, and with some gratitude.
I said but now, I saw our last of fagots
Destined to dress our last of meals, but said not
That the repast consisted of choice dainties,
Sent to our larder by that liberal suitor,
The kind Melchisedek.

FLORA.

Were famishing the word,
I'd famish ere I tasted them—the fop,
The fool, the low-born, low-bred, pedant coxcomb!

KATLEEN.

There spoke the blood of long-descended sires!
My cottage wisdom ought to echo back—
O the snug parsonage! the well-paid stipend!
The yew-hedged garden! bee-hives, pigs, and poultry!
But, to speak honestly, the peasant Katleen,
Valuing these good things justly, still would scorn
To wed, for such, the paltry Gullcrammer,
As much as Lady Flora.

FLORA.

Mock me not with a title, gentle cousin,
Which poverty has made ridiculous.—

[*Trumpets far off.*

Hark! they have broken up the weapon-shawing;
The vassals are dismiss'd, and marching homeward.

KATLEEN.

Comes your sire back to-night?

FLORA.

He did purpose
To tarry for the banquet. This day only,
Summon'd as a king's tenant, he resumes
The right of rank his birth assigns to him,
And mingles with the proudest.

KATLEEN.

To return
To his domestic wretchedness to-morrow—
I envy not the privilege. Let us go
To yonder height, and see the marksmen practise:
They shoot their match down in the dale beyond,
Betwixt the Lowland and the Forest district,
By ancient custom, for a tun of wine.
Let us go see which wins.

FLORA.

That were too forward.

KATLEEN.

Why, you may drop the screen before your face,
Which some chance breeze may haply blow aside
Just when a youth of special note takes aim.
It chanced even so that memorable morning,
When, nutting in the woods, we met young Leonard;—
And in good time here comes his sturdy comrade,
The rough Lance Blackthorn.

Enter LANCELOT BLACKTHORN, *a Forester, with the Carcass of a Deer on his back, and a Gun in his hand.*

BLACKTHORN.

Save you, damsels!

KATLEEN.

Godden, good yeoman.—Come you from the weapon-shaw?

BLACKTHORN.

Not I, indeed; there lies the mark I shot at.

[*Lays down the Deer.*

The time has been I had not miss'd the sport,
Although Lord Nithsdale's self had wanted venison;
But this same mate of mine, young Lëonard Dacre,
Makes me do what he lists;—he'll win the prize, though:
The Forest district will not loose its honour,
And that is all I care for—(*some shots are heard.*)
Hark! they're at it.
I'll go see the issue.

FLORA.

Leave not here
The produce of your hunting.

BLACKTHORN.

But I must, though.
This is his lair to-night, for Leonard Dacre
Charged me to leave the stag at Devorgoil;
Then shew me quickly where to stow the quarry,

And let me to the sports—(*more shots.*) Come, hasten, damsels!

FLORA.

It is impossible—we dare not take it.

BLACKTHORN.

There let it lie, then, and I'll wind my bugle,
That all within these tottering walls may know
That here lies venison, whoso likes to lift it.

[*About to blow.*

KATLEEN (*to* FLORA).

He will alarm your mother; and, besides,
Our Forest proverb teaches, that no question
Should ask where venison comes from.
Your careful mother, with her wonted prudence,
Will hold its presence pleads its own apology.—
Come, Blackthorn, I will shew you where to stow it.

[*Exeunt* KATLEEN *and* BLACKTHORN *into the Castle—more shooting—then a distant shout—Stragglers, armed in different ways, pass over the stage, as if from the Weaponshaw.*

FLORA.

The prize is won; that general shout proclaim'd it.
The marksmen and the vassals are dispersing.

[*She draws back.*

FIRST VASSAL (*a peasant*).

Ay, ay—'tis lost and won—the Forest have it.
'Tis they have all the luck on't.

SECOND VASSAL (*a shepherd*).

Luck, sayst thou, man? 'Tis practice, skill, and cunning.

THIRD VASSAL.

'Tis no such thing.—I had hit the mark precisely,
But for this cursed flint; and, as I fired,
A swallow cross'd mine eye too—Will you tell me
That that was but a chance, mine honest shepherd?

FIRST VASSAL.

Ay, and last year, when Lancelot Blackthorn won it,
Because my powder happen'd to be damp,
Was there no luck in that?—The worse luck mine.

SECOND VASSAL.

Still I say 'twas not chance; it might be witchcraft.

FIRST VASSAL.

Faith, not unlikely, neighbours; for these foresters
Do often haunt about this ruin'd castle.
I 've seen myself this spark—young Leonard Dacre—
Come stealing like a ghost ere break of day,
And after sunset, too, along this path;
And well you know the haunted towers of Devorgoil
Have no good reputation in the land.

SHEPHERD.

That have they not. I 've heard my father say—
Ghosts dance as lightly in its moonlight halls,
As ever maiden did at Midsummer
Upon the village-green.

FIRST VASSAL.

Those that frequent such spirit-haunted ruins

Must needs know more than simple Christians do.—
See, Lance this blessed moment leaves the castle,
And comes to triumph o'er us.

[BLACKTHORN *enters from the Castle, and comes forward while they speak.*

THIRD VASSAL.

A mighty triumph! What is't, after all,
Except the driving of a piece of lead—
As learned Master Gullcrammer defined it—
Just through the middle of a painted board.

BLACKTHORN.

And if he so define it, by your leave,
Your learned Master Gullcrammer's an ass.

THIRD VASSAL (*angrily*).

He is a preacher, huntsman, under favour.

SECOND VASSAL.

No quarrelling, neighbours—you may both be right.

Enter a FOURTH VASSAL, *with a gallon-stoup of wine.*

FOURTH VASSAL.

Why stand you brawling here? Young Leonard Dacre
Has set abroach the tun of wine he gain'd,
That all may drink who list. Blackthorn, I sought you;
Your comrade prays you will bestow this flagon
Where you have left the deer you killed this morning.

BLACKTHORN.

And that I will; but first we will take toll
To see if it's worth carriage. Shepherd, thy horn.

There must be due allowance made for leakage,
And that will come about a draught apiece.
Skink it about, and, when our throats are liquor'd,
We 'll merrily trowl our song of weaponshaw.

[*They drink about out of the* SHEPHERD'S *horn, and then sing.*

SONG.

We love the shrill trumpet, we love the drum's rattle,
They call us to sport, and they call us to battle;
And old Scotland shall laugh at the threats of a stranger,
While our comrades in pastime are comrades in danger.

If there's mirth in our house, 'tis our neighbour that shares it—
If peril approach, 'tis our neighbour that dares it;
And when we lead off to the pipe and the tabor,
The fair hand we press is the hand of a neighbour.

Then close your ranks, comrades, the bands that combine them,
Faith, friendship, and brotherhood, join'd to entwine them;
And we'll laugh at the threats of each insolent stranger,
While our comrades in sport are our comrades in danger.

BLACKTHORN.

Well, I must do mine errand. Master flagon
[*Shaking it.*
Is too consumptive for another bleeding.

SHEPHERD.

I must to my fold.

THIRD VASSAL.

I 'll to the butt of wine,
And see if that has given up the ghost yet.

FIRST VASSAL.

Have with you, neighbour.

[BLACKTHORN *enters the Castle, the rest exeunt severally.* MELCHISEDEK GULLCRAMMER *watches them off the stage, and then enters from the side-scene. His costume is a Geneva cloak and band, with a high-crowned hat; the rest of his dress in the fashion of James the First's time. He looks to the windows of the Castle, then draws back as if to escape observation, while he brushes his cloak, drives the white threads from his waistcoat with his wetted thumb, and dusts his shoes, all with the air of one who would not willingly be observed engaged in these offices. He then adjusts his collar and band, comes forward and speaks.*

GULLCRAMMER.

Right comely is thy garb, Melchisedek;
As well beseemeth one, whom good Saint Mungo,
The patron of our land and university,
Hath graced with licence both to teach and preach—
Who dare opine thou hither plod'st on foot?
Trim sits thy cloak, unruffled is thy band,
And not a speck upon thine outward man,
Bewrays the labours of thy weary sole.

[*Touches his shoe, and smiles complacently.*

Quaint was that jest and pleasant!—Now will I
Approach and hail the dwellers of this fort;
But specially sweet Flora Devorgoil,

Ere her proud sire return. He loves me not,
Mocketh my lineage, flouts at mine advancement—
Sour as the fruit the crab-tree furnishes,
And hard as is the cudgel it supplies;
But Flora—she 's a lily on the lake,
And I must reach her, though I risk a ducking.

[*As* GULLCRAMMER *moves towards the drawbridge,* BAULDIE DURWARD *enters, and interposes himself betwixt him and the Castle.* GULLCRAMMER *stops and speaks.*

Whom have we here?—that ancient fortune-teller,
Papist and sorcerer, and sturdy beggar,
Old Bauldie Durward! Would I were well past him!

[DURWARD *advances, partly in the dress of a palmer, partly in that of an old Scottish mendicant, having coarse blue cloak and badge, white beard, &c.*

DURWARD.

The blessing of the evening on your worship,
And on your taff'ty doublet. Much I marvel
Your wisdom chooseth such trim garb,[1] when tempests
Are gathering to the bursting.

GULLCRAMMER (*looks to his dress, and then to the sky, with some apprehension.*

Surely, Bauldie,
Thou dost belie the evening—in the west
The light sinks down as lovely as this band
Drops o'er this mantle—Tush, man! 'twill be fair.

[1] [MS.—"That you should walk in such trim guise."]

DURWARD.

Ay, but the storm I bode is big with blows,
Horsewhips for hailstones, clubs for thunderbolts;
And for the wailing of the midnight wind,
The unpitied howling of a cudgell'd coxcomb.
Come, come, I know thou seek'st fair Flora Devorgoil.

GULLCRAMMER.

And if I did, I do the damsel grace.
Her mother thinks so, and she has accepted
At these poor hands gifts of some consequence,
And curious dainties for the evening cheer,
To which I am invited—She respects me.

DURWARD.

But not so doth her father, haughty Oswald.
Bethink thee, he 's a baron——

GULLCRAMMER.

And a bare one;
Construe me that, old man!—The crofts of Mucklewhame—
Destined for mine so soon as heaven and earth
Have shared my uncle's soul and bones between them—
The crofts of Mucklewhame, old man, which nourish
Three scores of sheep, three cows, with each her follower,
A female palfrey eke—I will be candid,
She is of that meek tribe whom, in derision,
Our wealthy southern neighbours nickname donkeys——

DURWARD.

She hath her follower too—when thou art there.

GULLCRAMMER.

I say to thee, these crofts of Mucklewhame,
In the mere tything of their stock and produce,
Outvie whatever patch of land remains
To this old rugged castle and its owner.
Well, therefore, may Melchisedek Gullcrammer,
Younger of Mucklewhame, for such I write me,
Master of Arts, by grace of good Saint Andrew,
Preacher, in brief expectance of a kirk,
Endow'd with ten score Scottish pounds per annum,
Being eight pounds seventeen eight in sterling coin—
Well then, I say, may this Melchisedek,
Thus highly graced by fortune—and by nature
E'en gifted as thou seest—aspire to woo
The daughter of the beggar'd Devorgoil.

DURWARD.

Credit an old man's word, kind Master Gullcrammer,
You will not find it so.—Come, sir, I've known
The hospitality of Mucklewhame;
It reach'd not to profuseness—yet, in gratitude
For the pure water of its living well,
And for the barley loaves of its fair fields,
Wherein chopp'd straw contended with the grain
Which best should satisfy the appetite,
I would not see the hopeful heir of Mucklewhame
Thus fling himself on danger.

GULLCRAMMER.

Danger! what danger?—Know'st thou not, old Oswald

This day attends the muster of the shire,
Where the crown-vassals meet to shew their arms,
And their best horse of service?—'Twas good sport
(An if a man had dared but laugh at it)
To see old Oswald with his rusty morion,
And huge two-handed sword, that might have seen
The field of Bannockburn or Chevy-Chase,
Without a squire or vassal, page or groom,
Or e'en a single pikeman at his heels,
Mix with the proudest nobles of the county,
And claim precedence for his tatter'd person
O'er armours double gilt and ostrich-plumage.

DURWARD.

Ay! 'twas the jest at which fools laugh the loudest,
The downfall of our old nobility—
Which may forerun the ruin of a kingdom.
I've seen an idiot clap his hands, and shout
To see a tower like yon (*points to a part of the Castle*) stoop to its base,
In headlong ruin; while the wise look'd round,
And fearful sought a distant stance to watch
What fragment of the fabric next should follow;
For when the turrets fall, the walls are tottering.

GULLCRAMMER (*after pondering*).

If that means aught, it means thou saw'st old Oswald
Expell'd from the assembly.

DURWARD.

Thy sharp wit
Hath glanced unwittingly right nigh the truth.
Expell'd he was not, but his claim denied

At some contested point of ceremony.
He left the weaponshaw in high displeasure,
And hither comes—his wonted bitter temper
Scarce sweeten'd by the chances of the day.
'Twere much like rashness should you wait his coming,
And thither tends my counsel.

GULLCRAMMER.

And I'll take it;
Good Bauldie Durward, I will take thy counsel,
And will requite it with this minted farthing,
That bears our sovereign's head in purest copper.

DURWARD.

Thanks to thy bounty—Haste thee, good young master;
Oswald, besides the old two-handed sword,
Bears in his hand a staff of potency,
To charm intruders from his castle purlieus.

GULLCRAMMER.

I do abhor all charms, nor will abide
To hear or see, far less to feel their use.
Behold, I have departed. [*Exit hastily.*

Manet DURWARD.

DURWARD.

Thus do I play the idle part of one
Who seeks to save the moth from scorching him
In the bright taper's flame—And Flora's beauty[1]
Must, not unlike that taper, waste away,

[1] [MS.——"And Flora's years of beauty."]

Gilding the rugged walls that saw it kindled.
This was a shard-born beetle, heavy, drossy,[1]
Though boasting his dull drone and gilded wing.
Here comes a flutterer of another stamp,
Whom the same ray is charming to his ruin.

Enter LEONARD, *dressed as a huntsman; he pauses before the Tower, and whistles a note or two at intervals—drawing back, as if fearful of observation—yet waiting, as if expecting some reply.* DURWARD, *whom he had not observed, moves round, so as to front* LEONARD *unexpectedly.*

LEONARD.

I am too late—it was no easy task
To rid myself from yonder noisy revellers.
Flora!—I fear she's angry—Flora—Flora![2]

SONG.

Admire not that I gain'd the prize
From all the village crew;
How could I fail with hand or eyes,
When heart and faith were true?

And when in floods of rosy wine
My comrades drown'd their cares,
I thought but that thy heart was mine,
My own leapt light as theirs.

[1] [MS.—"This was an earth-born beetle, dull, and drossy."]

[2] [From the MS., the following song appears to have been a *recent* interpolation.]

My brief delay then do not blame,
Nor deem your swain untrue;
My form but linger'd at the game,
My soul was still with you.

She hears not!

DURWARD.

But a friend hath heard—Leonard, I pity thee.

LEONARD (*starts, but recovers himself*).

Pity, good father, is for those in want,
In age, in sorrow, in distress of mind,
Or agony of body. I'm in health—
Can match my limbs against the stag in chase,
Have means enough to meet my simple wants,
And am so free of soul that I can carol
To woodland and to wild in notes as lively
As are my jolly bugle's.

DURWARD.

Even therefore dost thou need my pity, Leonard,
And therefore I bestow it, paying thee,
Before thou feel'st the need, my mite of pity.
Leonard, thou lovest; and in that little word
There lies enough to claim the sympathy
Of men who wear such hoary locks as mine,
And know what misplaced love is sure to end in.[1]

[1] [The MS. here adds:

"*Leonard.* But mine is not misplaced—If I sought beauty,
Resides it not with Flora Devorgoil?
If piety, if sweetness, if discretion,
Patience beneath ill-suited tasks of labour,
And filial tenderness, that can beguile
Her moody sire's dark thoughts, as the soft moonshine
Illumes the cloud of night—if I seek these,

LEONARD.

Good father, thou art old, and even thy youth,
As thou hast told me, spent in cloister'd cells,
Fits thee but ill to judge the passions,
Which are the joy and charm of social life.
Press me no farther, then, nor waste those moments
Whose worth thou canst not estimate.

[*As turning from him.*

DURWARD (*detains him*).

Stay, young man!
'Tis seldom that a beggar claims a debt;
Yet I bethink me of a gay young stripling,
That owes to these white locks and hoary beard
Something of reverence and of gratitude
More than he wills to pay.

LEONARD.

Forgive me, father. Often hast thou told me,
That in the ruin of my father's house
You saved the orphan Leonard in his cradle;
And well I know, that to thy care alone—
Care seconded by means beyond thy seeming—
I owe whate'er of nature I can boast.

Are they not all with Flora? Number me
The list of female virtues one by one,
And I will answer all with Flora Devorgoil.
" *Durward.* This is the wonted pitch of youthful passion;
And every woman who hath had a lover,
However now deem'd crabbed, cross, and cankered,
And crooked both in temper and in shape,
Has in her day been thought the purest, wisest,
Gentlest, and best condition'd—and o'er all
Fairest and liveliest of Eve's numerous daughters.
" *Leonard.* Good father, thou art old," &c.]

DURWARD.

Then for thy life preserved,
And for the means of knowledge I have furnish'd
(Which lacking, man is levell'd with the brutes),
Grant me this boon:—Avoid these fated walls!
A curse is on them, bitter, deep, and heavy,
Of power to split the massiest tower they boast
From pinnacle to dungeon vault. It rose
Upon the gay horizon of proud Devorgoil,
As unregarded as the fleecy cloud,
The first forerunner of the hurricane,
Scarce seen amid the welkin's shadeless blue.
Dark grew it, and more dark, and still the fortunes
Of this doom'd family have darken'd with it.
It hid their sovereign's favour, and obscured
The lustre of their service, gender'd hate
Betwixt them and the mighty of the land;
Till by degrees the waxing tempest rose,
And stripp'd the goodly tree of fruit and flowers,
And buds, and boughs, and branches. There remains
A rugged trunk, dismember'd and unsightly,
Waiting the bursting of the final bolt
To splinter it to shivers. Now, go pluck
Its single tendril to enwreath thy brow,
And rest beneath its shade—to share the ruin!

LEONARD.

This anathema,
Whence should it come?—How merited?—and when?

DURWARD.

'Twas in the days
Of Oswald's grandsire—'mid Galwegian chiefs
The fellest foe, the fiercest champion.
His blood-red pennons scared the Cumbrian coast,
And wasted towns and manors mark'd his progress.
His galleys stored with treasure, and their decks
Crowded with English captives, who beheld,
With weeping eyes, their native shores retire,
He bore him homeward; but a tempest rose——

LEONARD.

So far I've heard the tale,
And spare thee the recital—The grim Chief,
Marking his vessels labour on the sea,
And loath to lose his treasure, gave command
To plunge his captives in the raging deep.

DURWARD.

There sunk the lineage of a noble name,
And the wild waves boom'd over sire and son,
Mother and nursling, of the House of Aglionby,[1]
Leaving but one frail tendril.—Hence the fate
That hovers o'er these turrets—hence the peasant,
Belated, hying homewards, dreads to cast
A glance upon that portal, lest he see
The unshrouded spectres of the murder'd dead;[2]
Or the avenging Angel, with his sword,

[1] [MS.——"House of Ehrenwald."]
[2] [MS.——"spectres of the murder'd captives."]

Waving destruction; or the grisly phantom
Of that fell Chief, the doer of the deed,
Which still, they say, roams through his empty halls,
And mourns their wasteness and their lonelihood.

LEONARD.

Such is the dotage
Of superstition, father, ay, and the cant
Of hoodwink'd prejudice.—Not for atonement
Of some foul deed done in the ancient warfare,
When war was butchery, and men were wolves,
Doth Heaven consign the innocent to suffering.
I tell thee, Flora's virtues might atone
For all the massacres her sires have done,
Since first the Pictish race their stained limbs[1]
Array'd in wolf's skin.

DURWARD.

Leonard, ere yet this beggar's scrip and cloak
Supplied the place of mitre and of crosier,[2]
Which in these alter'd lands must not be worn,
I was superior of a brotherhood
Of holy men—the Prior of Lanercost.
Nobles then sought my footstool many a league,
There to unload their sins—questions of conscience
Of deepest import were not deem'd too nice
For my decision, youth.—But not even then,

[1] [MS.——"their painted limbs."]

[2] [—"Supplied the { place / want } of palmer's cowl and staff."]

With mitre on my brow, and all the voice
Which Rome gives to a father of her church,
Dared I pronounce so boldly on the ways
Of hidden Providence, as thou, young man,
Whose chiefest knowledge is to track a stag,
Or wind a bugle, hast presumed to do.

LEONARD.

Nay, I pray forgive me,
Father; thou know'st I meant not to presume——

DURWARD.

Can I refuse thee pardon?—Thou art all
That war and change have left to the poor Durward.
Thy father, too, who lost his life and fortune
Defending Lanercost, when its fair aisles
Were spoil'd by sacrilege—I bless'd his banner,
And yet it prosper'd not. But—all I could—
Thee from the wreck I saved, and for thy sake
Have still dragg'd on my life of pilgrimage
And penitence upon the hated shores
I else had left for ever. Come with me,
And I will teach thee there is healing in
The wounds which friendship gives. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Scene changes to the interior of the Castle. An Apartment is discovered, in which there is much appearance of present poverty, mixed with some relics of former grandeur. On the wall hangs, amongst other things, a suit of ancient armour; by the table is a covered basket; behind, and concealed by it, the carcass of a roe-deer. There is a small latticed window, which, appearing to perforate a wall of great thickness, is supposed to look out towards the drawbridge. It is in the shape of a loop-hole for musketry; and, as is not unusual in old buildings, is placed so high up in the wall, that it is only approached by five or six narrow stone steps.

ELEANOR, *the wife of* OSWALD *of* DEVORGOIL, FLORA, *and* KATLEEN, *her Daughter and Niece, are discovered at work. The former spins, the latter are embroidering.* ELEANOR *quits her own labour to examine the manner in which* FLORA *is executing her task, and shakes her head as if dissatisfied.*

ELEANOR.

Fy on it, Flora; this botch'd work of thine
Shews that thy mind is distant from thy task.
The finest tracery of our old cathedral
Had not a richer, freer, bolder pattern,
Than Flora once could trace. Thy thoughts are wandering.

FLORA.

They 're with my father. Broad upon the lake
The evening sun sunk down; huge piles of clouds,
Crimson and sable, rose upon his disk,
And quench'd him ere his setting, like some champion
In his last conflict, losing all his glory.
Sure signals those of storm. And if my father
Be on his homeward road——

ELEANOR.

But that he will not.
Baron of Devorgoil, this day at least
He banquets with the nobles, who the next
Would scarce vouchsafe an alms to save his household
From want or famine. Thanks to a kind friend,
For one brief space we shall not need their aid.

FLORA (*joyfully*).

What! knew you then his gift?
How silly I that would, yet durst not tell it!
I fear my father will condemn us both,
That easily accepted such a present.

KATLEEN.

Now, here 's the game a bystander sees better
Than those who play it.—My good aunt is pondering
On the good cheer which Gullcrammer has sent us,
And Flora thinks upon the forest venison. [*Aside.*

ELEANOR (*to* FLORA).

Thy father need not know on't—'tis a boon
Comes timely, when frugality, nay, abstinence,
Might scarce avail us longer. I had hoped

Ere now a visit from the youthful donor,
That we might thank his bounty; and perhaps
My Flora thought the same, when Sunday's kerchief
And the best kirtle were sought out, and donn'd
To grace a work-day evening.

FLORA.

Nay, mother, that is judging all too close!
My work-day gown was torn—my kerchief sullied;
And thus—But, think you, will the gallant come?

ELEANOR.

He will, for with these dainties came a message
From gentle Master Gullcrammer, to intimate——

FLORA (*greatly disappointed*).

Gullcrammer?

KATLEEN.

There burst the bubble—down fell house of cards,
And cousin's like to cry for't! [*Aside.*

ELEANOR.

Gullcrammer? ay, Gullcrammer—thou scorn'st not at him?
'Twere something short of wisdom in a maiden,
Who, like the poor bat in the Grecian fable,
Hovers betwixt two classes in the world,
And is disclaim'd by both the mouse and bird.

KATLEEN.

I am the poor mouse,
And may go creep into what hole I list,
And no one heed me—Yet I'll waste a word
Of counsel on my betters.—Kind my aunt,

And you, my gentle cousin, were 't not better
We thought of dressing this same gear for supper,
Than quarrelling about the worthless donor?

ELEANOR.

Peace, minx!

FLORA.

Thou hast no feeling, cousin Katleen.

KATLEEN.

Soh! I have brought them both on my poor shoulders;
So meddling peace-makers are still rewarded:
E'en let them to 't again, and fight it out.

FLORA.

Mother, were I disclaim'd of every class,
I would not therefore so disclaim myself,
As even a passing thought of scorn to waste
On cloddish Gullcrammer.

ELEANOR.

List to me, love, and let adversity
Incline thine ear to wisdom.—Look around thee—
Of the gay youths who boast a noble name,
Which will incline to wed a dowerless damsel?
And of the yeomanry, who think'st thou, Flora,
Would ask to share the labours of his farm
An high-born beggar?—This young man is modest——

FLORA.

Silly, good mother; sheepish, if you will it.

ELEANOR.

E'en call it what you list—the softer temper,

The fitter to endure the bitter sallies
Of one whose wit is all too sharp for mine.

FLORA.

Mother you cannot mean it as you say;
You cannot bid me prize conceited folly?

ELEANOR.

Content thee, child—each lot has its own blessings.
This youth, with his plain-dealing honest suit,
Proffers thee quiet, peace, and competence,
Redemption from a home, o'er which fell Fate
Stoops like a falcon.—O, if thou couldst choose
(As no such choice is given) 'twixt such a mate
And some proud noble!—Who, in sober judgment,
Would like to navigate the heady river,
Dashing in fury from its parent mountain,
More than the waters of the quiet lake?

KATLEEN.

Now can I hold no longer—Lake, good aunt?
Nay, in the name of truth, say mill-pond, horse-pond;
Or if there be a pond more miry,
More sluggish, mean-derived, and base than either,
Be such Gullcrammer's emblem—and his portion!

FLORA.

I would that he or I were in our grave,
Rather than thus his suit should goad me!—Mother,
Flora of Devorgoil, though low in fortunes,
Is still too high in mind to join her name
With such a base-born churl as Gullcrammer.

ELEANOR.

You are trim-maidens both!
(*To* FLORA.) Have you forgotten,
Or did you mean to call to *my* remembrance
Thy father chose a wife of peasant blood?

FLORA.

Will you speak thus to me, or think the stream
Can mock the fountain it derives its source from?
My venerated mother, in that name
Lies all on earth a child should chiefest honour;
And with that name to mix reproach or taunt,
Were only short of blasphemy to Heaven.

ELEANOR.

Then listen, Flora, to that mother's counsel,
Or rather profit by that mother's fate.
Your father's fortunes were but bent, not broken,
Until he listen'd to his rash affection.
Means were afforded to redeem his house,
Ample and large—the hand of a rich heiress
Awaited, almost courted, his acceptance;
He saw my beauty—such it then was call'd,
Or such at least he thought it—the wither'd bush,
Whate'er it now may seem, had blossoms then—
And he forsook the proud and wealthy heiress,
To wed with me and ruin——

KATLEEN (*aside*).

The more fool,
Say I, apart, the peasant maiden then,
Who might have chose a mate from her own hamlet.

ELEANOR.

Friends fell off,
And to his own resources, his own counsels,
Abandon'd, as they said, the thoughtless prodigal,
Who had exchanged rank, riches, pomp, and honour,
For the mean beauties of a cottage maid.

FLORA.

It was done like my father,
Who scorn'd to sell what wealth can never buy—
True love and free affections. And he loves you!
If you have suffer'd in a weary world,
Your sorrows have been jointly borne, and love
Has made the load sit lighter.

ELEANOR.

Ay, but a misplaced match hath that deep curse in't,
That can embitter e'en the purest streams
Of true affection. Thou hast seen me seek,
With the strict caution early habits taught me,
To match our wants and means—hast seen thy father,
With aristocracy's high brow of scorn,
Spurn at economy, the cottage virtue,
As best befitting her whose sires were peasants:
Nor can I, when I see my lineage scorn'd,
Always conceal in what contempt I hold
The fancied claims of rank he clings to fondly.

FLORA.

Why will you do so?—well you know it chafes him.

ELEANOR.

Flora, thy mother is but mortal woman,
Nor can at all times check an eager tongue.

KATLEEN (*aside*).

That's no new tidings to her niece and daughter.

ELEANOR.

O mayst thou never know the spited feelings
That gender discord in adversity
Betwixt the dearest friends and truest lovers!
In the chill damping gale of poverty,
If Love's lamp go not out, it gleams but palely,
And twinkles in the socket.

FLORA.

But tenderness can screen it with her veil,[1]
Till it revive again—By gentleness, good mother,
How oft I've seen you soothe my father's mood!

KATLEEN.

Now there speak youthful hope and fantasy! [*Aside.*

ELEANOR.

That is an easier task in youth than age;
Our temper hardens, and our charms decay,
And both are needed in that art of soothing.

KATLEEN.

And there speaks sad experience. [*Aside.*

ELEANOR.

Besides, since that our state was utter desperate,
Darker his brow, more dangerous grow his words;
Fain would I snatch thee from the woe and wrath
Which darken'd long my life, and soon must end it.

[*A knocking without;* ELEANOR *shews alarm*

[1] [MS.—"Ay, but the veil of tenderness can screen it."]

It was thy father's knock, haste to the gate.

[*Exeunt* FLORA *and* KATLEEN.

What can have happ'd?—he thought to stay the night.
This gear must not be seen.

[*As she is about to remove the basket, she sees the body of the roe-deer.*

What have we here? a roe-deer!—as I fear it,
This was the gift of which poor Flora thought.
The young and handsome hunter—but time presses.

[*She removes the basket and the roe into a closet. As she has done—*

Enter OSWALD *of* DEVORGOIL, FLORA, *and* KATLEEN.

[*He is dressed in a scarlet cloak, which should seem worn and old—a headpiece, and old-fashioned sword—the rest of his dress that of a peasant. His countenance and manner should express the moody and irritable haughtiness of a proud man involved in calamity, and who has been exposed to recent insult.*

OSWALD (*addressing his wife*).

The sun hath set—why is the drawbridge lower'd?

ELEANOR.

The counterpoise has fail'd, and Flora's strength,
Katleen's, and mine united, could not raise it.

OSWALD.

Flora and thou! A goodly garrison
To hold a castle, which, if fame say true,
Once foil'd the King of Norse and all his rovers.

ELEANOR.

It might be so in ancient times, but now——

OSWALD.

A herd of deer might storm proud Devorgoil.

KATLEEN (*aside to* FLORA).

You, Flora, know full well one deer already
Has entered at the breach; and, what is worse,
The escort is not yet march'd off, for Blackthorn
Is still within the castle.

FLORA.

In Heaven's name, rid him out on 't, ere my father
Discovers he is here! Why went he not
Before?

KATLEEN.

Because I staid him on some little business;
I had a plan to scare poor paltry Gullcrammer
Out of his paltry wits.

FLORA.

Well, haste ye now,
And try to get him off.

KATLEEN.

I will not promise that.
I would not turn an honest hunter's dog,
So well I love the woodcraft, out of shelter
In such a night as this—far less his master:
But I 'll do this, I 'll try to hide him for you.

OSWALD (*whom his wife has assisted to take off his cloak and feathered cap*).

Ay, take them off, and bring my peasant's bonnet

And peasant's plaid—I'll noble it no further.
Let them erase my name from honour's lists,
And drag my scutcheon at their horses' heels;
I have deserved it all, for I am poor,
And poverty hath neither right of birth,
Nor rank, relation, claim, nor privilege,
To match a new-coin'd viscount, whose good grandsire,
The Lord be with him, was a careful skipper,
And steer'd his paltry skiff 'twixt Leith and Campvere—
Marry, sir, he could buy Geneva cheap,
And knew the coast by moonlight.

FLORA.

Mean you the Viscount Ellondale, my father?
What strife has been between you?

OSWALD.

O, a trifle!
Not worth a wise man's thinking twice about—
Precedence is a toy—a superstition
About a table's end, joint-stool, and trencher.
Something was once thought due to long descent,
And something to Galwegia's oldest baron—
But let that pass—a dream of the old time.

ELEANOR.

It is indeed a dream.

OSWALD (*turning upon her rather quickly*).

Ha! said ye! let me hear these words more plain.

ELEANOR.

Alas! they are but echoes of your own.
Match'd with the real woes that hover o'er us,
What are the idle visions of precedence,
But, as you term them, dreams, and toys, and trifles,
Not worth a wise man's thinking twice upon?

OSWALD.

Ay, 'twas for you I framed that consolation,
The true philosophy of clouted shoe
And linsey-woolsey kirtle. I know, that minds
Of nobler stamp receive no dearer motive[1]
Than what is linked with honour. Ribands, tassels,
Which are but shreds of silk and spangled tinsel—[2]
The right of place, which in itself is momentary—
A word, which is but air—may in themselves,
And to the nobler file, be steep'd so richly
In that elixir, honour, that the lack
Of things so very trivial in themselves
Shall be misfortune. One shall seek for them[3]
O'er the wild waves—one in the deadly breach
And battle's headlong front—one in the paths
Of midnight study—and, in gaining these
Emblems of honour, each will hold himself
Repaid for all his labours, deeds, and dangers.

[1] [MS.——"Yet I know, for minds
Of nobler stamp earth has no dearer motive."]
[2] [MS.——"tinsell'd spangle."]
[3] [MS.——"One shall seek these emblems."]

What then should he think, knowing them his own,
Who sees what warriors and what sages toil for,
The formal and establish'd marks of honour,
Usurp'd from him by upstart insolence?

ELEANOR (*who has listened to the last speech with some impatience*).

This is but empty declamation, Oswald.
The fragments left at yonder full-spread banquet,
Nay, even the poorest crust swept from the table,
Ought to be far more precious to a father,
Whose family lacks food, than the vain boast,
He sate at the board-head.

OSWALD.

Thou 'lt drive me frantic!—I will tell thee, woman—
Yet why to thee? There is another ear
Which that tale better suits, and he shall hear it.
[*Looks at his sword, which he has unbuckled, and addresses the rest of the speech to it.*
Yes, trusty friend, my father knew thy worth,
And often proved it—often told me of it—
Though thou and I be now held lightly of,
And want the gilded hatchments of the time,
I think we both may prove true metal still.
'Tis thou shalt tell this story, right this wrong:—
Rest thou till time is fitting. [*Hangs up the sword.*
[*The Women look at each other with anxiety during this speech, which they partly overhear. They both approach* OSWALD.

ELEANOR.

Oswald—my dearest husband!

FLORA.

My dear father.

OSWALD.

Peace, both—we speak no more of this. I go
To heave the drawbridge up. [*Exit.*

KATLEEN *mounts the steps towards the loop-hole, looks out, and speaks.*

The storm is gathering fast—broad, heavy drops
Fall plashing on the bosom of the lake,
And dash its inky surface into circles;
The distant hills are hid in wreaths of darkness.
'Twill be a fearful night.

OSWALD *re-enters, and throws himself into a seat.*

ELEANOR.

More dark and dreadful
Than is our destiny, it cannot be.

OSWALD (*to* FLORA).

Such is Heaven's will—it is our part to bear it.
We're warranted, my child, from ancient story
And blessed writ, to say, that song assuages
The gloomy cares that prey upon our reason,
And wake a strife betwixt our better feelings
And the fierce dictates of the headlong passions.
Sing, then, my love; for if a voice have influence

To mediate peace betwixt me and my destiny,
Flora, it must be thine.

FLORA.

My best to please you!

SONG.

When the tempest's at the loudest,
On its gale the eagle rides;
When the ocean rolls the proudest,
Through the foam the sea-bird glides—
All the rage of wind and sea
Is subdued by constancy.

Gnawing want and sickness pining,
All the ills that men endure;
Each their various pangs combining,
Constancy can find a cure—
Pain, and Fear, and Poverty,
Are subdued by constancy.

Bar me from each wonted pleasure,
Make me abject, mean, and poor;
Heap on insults without measure,
Chain me to a dungeon floor—
I'll be happy, rich, and free,
If endow'd with constancy.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Chamber in a distant part of the Castle. A large Window in the flat scene, supposed to look on the Lake, which is occasionally illuminated by lightning. There is a Couch-bed in the Room, and an antique Cabinet.

Enter KATLEEN, *introducing* BLACKTHORN.[1]

KATLEEN.

This was the destined scene of action, Blackthorn,
And here our properties. But all in vain,
For of Gullcrammer we 'll see nought to-night,
Except the dainties that I told you of.

BLACKTHORN.

O, if he 's left that same hog's face and sausages,
He will try back upon them, never fear it.
The cur will open on the trail of bacon,
Like my old brach-hound.

[1] [The MS. throughout the First Act reads *Buckthorn.*]

KATLEEN.

And should that hap, we 'll play our comedy—
Shall we not, Blackthorn? Thou shalt be Owlspiegle——

BLACKTHORN.

And who may that same hard-named person be?

KATLEEN.

I 've told you nine times over.

BLACKTHORN.

Yes, pretty Katleen, but my eyes were busy
In looking at you all the time you were talking;
And so I lost the tale.

KATLEEN.

Then shut your eyes, and let your goodly ears
Do their good office.

BLACKTHORN.

That were too hard penance.
Tell but thy tale once more, and I will hearken
As if I were thrown out, and listening for
My blood-hound's distant bay.

KATLEEN.

A civil simile!
Then for the tenth time, and the last—be told,
Owlspiegle was of old the wicked barber
To Erick, wicked Lord of Devorgoil.

BLACKTHORN.

The chief who drown'd his captives in the Solway—
We all have heard of him.

KATLEEN.

A hermit hoar, a venerable man—

So goes the legend—came to wake repentance
In the fierce lord, and tax'd him with his guilt;
But he, heart-harden'd, turn'd into derision
The man of heaven, and, as his dignity
Consisted much in a long reverend beard,
Which reach'd his girdle, Erick caused his barber,
This same Owlspiegle, violate its honours
With sacrilegious razor, and clip his hair
After the fashion of a roguish fool.

BLACKTHORN.

This was reversing of our ancient proverb,
And shaving for the devil's, not for God's sake.

KATLEEN.

True, most grave Blackthorn; and in punishment
Of this foul act of scorn, the barber's ghost
Is said to have no resting after death,
But haunts these halls, and chiefly this same chamber,
Where the profanity was acted, trimming
And clipping all such guests as sleep within
Such is at least the tale our elders tell,
With many others, of this haunted castle.

BLACKTHORN.

And you would have me take this shape of Owlspiegle,
And trim the wise Melchisedek!—I wonnot.

KATLEEN.

You will not!

BLACKTHORN.

No—unless you bear a part.

KATLEEN.

What! can you not alone play such a farce?

BLACKTHORN.

Not I—I 'm dull. Besides, we foresters
Still hunt our game in couples. Look you, Katleen,
We danced at Shrovetide—then you were my partner;
We sung at Christmas—you kept time with me;
And if we go a mumming in this business,
By heaven, you must be one, or Master Gullcrammer
Is like to rest unshaven——

KATLEEN.

Why, you fool,
What end can this serve?

BLACKTHORN.

Nay, I know not, I.
But if we keep this wont of being partners,
Why, use makes perfect—who knows what may happen?

KATLEEN.

Thou art a foolish patch—But sing our carol,
As I have alter'd it, with some few words
To suit the characters, and I will bear——

[*Gives a paper.*

BLACKTHORN.

Part in the gambol. I 'll go study quickly.
Is there no other ghost, then, haunts the castle,
But this same barber shave-a-penny goblin?
I thought they glanced in every beam of moonshine,
As frequent as the bat.

KATLEEN.

I 've heard my aunt's high husband tell of prophecies,
And fates impending o'er the house of Devorgoil;
Legends first coin'd by ancient superstition,
And render'd current by credulity
And pride of lineage. Five years have I dwelt,
And ne'er saw any thing more mischievous
Than what I am myself.

BLACKTHORN.

And that is quite enough, I warrant you.
But, stay, where shall I find a dress
To play this—what d'ye call him—Owlspiegle?

KATLEEN (*takes dresses out of the cabinet*).

Why, there are his own clothes,
Preserved with other trumpery of the sort,
For we have kept nought but what is good for nought.

[*She drops a cap as she draws out the clothes. Blackthorn lifts it, and gives it to her.*

Nay, keep it for thy pains—it is a coxcomb;
So call'd in ancient times, in ours a fool's cap;
For you must know they kept a Fool at Devorgoil
In former days; but now are well contented
To play the fool themselves to save expenses;
Yet give it me, I 'll find a worthy use for 't.
I 'll take this page's dress, to play the page
Cockledemoy, who waits on ghostly Owlspiegle;
And yet 'tis needless, too, for Gullcrammer
Will scarce be here to-night.

BLACKTHORN.

I tell you that he will—I will uphold
His plighted faith and true allegiance
Unto a sows'd sow's face and sausages,
And such the dainties that you say he sent you,
Against all other likings whatsoever,
Except a certain sneaking of affection,
Which makes some folks I know of play the fool,
To please some other folks.

KATLEEN.

Well, I do hope he 'll come—there 's first a chance
He will be cudgell'd by my noble uncle—
I cry his mercy—by my good aunt's husband,
Who did vow vengeance, knowing nought of him
But by report, and by a limping sonnet
Which he had fashion'd to my cousin's glory,
And forwarded by blind Tom Long the carrier;
So there 's the chance, first of a hearty beating,
Which failing, we 've this after-plot of vengeance.

BLACKTHORN.

Kind damsel, how considerate and merciful!
But how shall we get off, our parts being play'd?

KATLEEN.

For that we are well fitted; here 's a trap-door
Sinks with a counterpoise—you shall go that way.
I 'll make my exit yonder—'neath the window,
A balcony communicates with the tower
That overhangs the lake.

BLACKTHORN.

'Twere a rare place, this house of Devorgoil,
To play at hide-and-seek in—shall we try,
One day, my pretty Katleen?

KATLEEN.

Hands off, rude ranger! I'm no managed hawk
To stoop to lure of yours.—But bear you gallantly;
This Gullcrammer hath vex'd my cousin much,
I fain would have some vengeance.

BLACKTHORN.

I'll bear my part with glee—he spoke irreverently
Of practice at a mark!

KATLEEN.

That cries for vengeance.
But I must go—I hear my aunt's shrill voice!
My cousin and her father will scream next.

ELEANOR (*at a distance*).

Katleen! Katleen!

BLACKTHORN.

Hark to old Sweetlips!—
Away with you before the full cry open—
But stay, what have you there?

KATLEEN (*with a bundle she has taken from the wardrobe*).

My dress, my page's dress—let it alone.

BLACKTHORN.

Your tiring-room is not, I hope, far distant;
You're inexperienced in these new habiliments—
I am most ready to assist your toilet.

KATLEEN.

Out, you great ass! was ever such a fool! [*Runs off.*

BLACKTHORN (*sings*).

O, Robin Hood was a bowman good,
And a bowman good was he,
And he met with a maiden in merry Sherwood,
All under the greenwood tree.

Now give me a kiss, quoth bold Robin Hood,
Now give me a kiss, said he,
For there never came maid into merry Sherwood,
But she paid the forester's fee.

I've coursed this twelvemonth this sly puss, young Katleen,
And she has dodged me, turn'd beneath my nose,
And flung me out a score of yards at once;
If this same gear fadge right, I'll cote and mouth her,
And then! whoop! dead! dead! dead!—She is the metal
To make a woodsman's wife of!——

[*Pauses a moment.*

Well—I can find a hare upon her form
With any man in Nithsdale—stalk a deer,
Run Reynard to the earth for all his doubles,
Reclaim a haggard hawk that's wild and wayward,
Can bait a wild-cat—sure the devil's in't
But I can match a woman—I'll to study.

[*Sits down on the couch to examine the paper.*

SCENE II.

Scene changes to the inhabited Apartment of the Castle, as in the last scene of the preceding Act. A fire is kindled, by which OSWALD *sits in an attitude of deep and melancholy thought, without paying attention to what passes around him.* ELEANOR *is busy in covering a table;* FLORA *goes out and re-enters, as if busied in the kitchen. There should be some by-play —the women whispering together, and watching the state of* OSWALD; *then separating, and seeking to avoid his observation, when he casually raises his head, and drops it again. This must be left to taste and management. The Women, in the first part of the scene, talk apart, and as if fearful of being overheard; the by-play of stopping occasionally, and attending to* OSWALD'S *movements, will give liveliness to the Scene.*

ELEANOR.

Is all prepared?

FLORA.

Ay; but I doubt the issue
Will give my sire less pleasure than you hope for.

ELEANOR.

Tush, maid—I know thy father's humour better.

He was high-bred in gentle luxuries;
And when our griefs began, I 've wept apart,
While lordly cheer and high-fill'd cups of wine
Were blinding him against the woe to come.
He has turn'd his back upon a princely banquet:
We will not spread his board—this night at least,
Since chance hath better furnish'd—with dry bread,
And water from the well.

Enter KATLEEN, *and hears the last speech.*

KATLEEN (*aside*).

Considerate aunt!—she deems that a good supper
Were not a thing indifferent even to him
Who is to hang to-morrow; since she thinks so,
We must take care the venison has due honour—
So much I owe the sturdy knave, Lance Blackthorn.

FLORA.

Mother, alas! when Grief turns reveller,
Despair is cup-bearer. What shall hap to-morrow?—

ELEANOR.

I have learn'd carelessness from fruitless care.
Too long I 've watch'd to-morrow—let it come
And cater for itself—Thou hear'st the thunder.
[*Low and distant thunder.*
This is a gloomy night—within, alas!
[*Looking at her husband.*
Still gloomier and more threatening—Let us use
Whatever means we have to drive it o'er,
And leave to Heaven to-morrow. Trust me, Flora,
'Tis the philosophy of desperate want

To match itself but with the present evil,
And face one grief at once.
Away, I wish thine aid and not thy counsel.

[*As* FLORA *is about to go off,* GULLCRAMMER'S *voice is heard behind the flat scene, as if from the drawbridge.*

GULLCRAMMER (*behind*).

Hillo—hillo—hilloa—hoa—hoa!

[OSWALD *raises himself and listens;* ELEANOR *goes up the steps, and opens the window at the loop-hole;* GULLCRAMMER'S *voice is then heard more distinctly.*

GULLCRAMMER.

Kind Lady Devorgoil—sweet Mistress Flora!—
The night grows fearful, I have lost my way,
And wander'd till the road turn'd round with me,
And brought me back—For Heaven's sake, give me shelter!

KATLEEN (*aside*).

Now, as I live, the voice of Gullcrammer!
Now shall our gambol be play'd off with spirit;
I 'll swear I am the only one to whom
That screech-owl hoop was e'er acceptable.

OSWALD.

What bawling knave is this that takes our dwelling
For some hedge-inn, the haunt of lated drunkards?

ELEANOR.

What shall I say?—Go, Katleen, speak to him.

KATLEEN (*aside*).

The game is in my hands—I will say something

Will fret the Baron's pride—and then he enters.
(*She speaks from the window.*) Good sir, be patient!
We are poor folks—it is but six Scotch miles
To the next borough town, where your Reverence
May be accommodated to your wants;
We are poor folks, an't please your Reverence,
And keep a narrow household—there's no track
To lead your steps astray——

GULLCRAMMER.

Nor none to lead them right.—You kill me, lady,
If you deny me harbour. To budge from hence,
And in my weary plight, were sudden death,
Interment, funeral-sermon, tombstone, epitaph.

OSWALD.

Who's he that is thus clamorous without?
(*To* ELEANOR.) Thou know'st him?

ELEANOR (*confused*).

I know him?—no—yes—'tis a worthy clergyman,
Benighted on his way;—but think not of him.

KATLEEN.

The morn will rise when that the tempest's past,
And if he miss the marsh, and can avoid
The crags upon the left, the road is plain.

OSWALD.

Then this is all your piety!—to leave
One whom the holy duties of his office
Have summon'd over moor and wilderness,
To pray beside some dying wretch's bed,
Who (erring mortal) still would cleave to life,
Or wake some stubborn sinner to repentance—

To leave him, after offices like these,
To choose his way in darkness 'twixt the marsh
And dizzy precipice?[1]

ELEANOR.

What can I do?

OSWALD.

Do what thou canst—the wealthiest do no more—
And if so much, 'tis well. These crumbling walls,
While yet they bear a roof, shall now, as ever,
Give shelter to the wanderer[2]—Have we food?
He shall partake it—Have we none? the fast
Shall be accounted with the good man's merits
And our misfortunes——

[*He goes to the loop-hole while he speaks, and places himself there in room of his Wife, who comes down with reluctance.*

GULLCRAMMER (*without*).

Hillo—hoa—hoa!
By my good faith, I cannot plod it farther;
The attempt were death.

OSWALD (*speaks from the window*).

Patience, my friend, I come to lower the drawbridge.

[*Descends, and exit.*

ELEANOR.

O, that the screaming bittern had his couch
Where he deserves it,[3] in the deepest marsh!

[1] [MS.—"And headlong dizzy precipice."]

[2] [MS.——"shall give, as ever,
Their shelter to the { needy. / wanderer."]

[3] [MS.—"Where it is fittest," &c.]

KATLEEN.

I would not give this sport for all the rent
Of Devorgoil, when Devorgoil was richest!
(*To* ELEANOR.) But now you chided me, my dearest aunt,
For wishing him a horse-pond for his portion?

ELEANOR.

Yes, saucy girl; but, an it please you, then
He was not fretting me; if he had sense enough,
And skill to bear him as some casual stranger—
But he is dull as earth, and every hint
Is lost on him, as hail-shot on the cormorant,
Whose hide is proof except to musket-bullets!

FLORA (*apart*).

And yet to such a one would my kind mother,
Whose chiefest fault is loving me too fondly,
Wed her poor daughter!

Enter GULLCRAMMER, *his dress damaged by the storm:* ELEANOR *runs to meet him, in order to explain to him that she wished him to behave as a stranger.* GULLCRAMMER, *mistaking her approach for an invitation to familiarity, advances with the air of pedantic conceit belonging to his character, when* OSWALD *enters*—ELEANOR *recovers herself, and assumes an air of distance*—GULLCRAMMER *is confounded, and does not know what to make of it.*

OSWALD.

The counterpoise has clean given way; the bridge

Must e'en remain unraised, and leave us open,
For this night's course at least, to passing visitants.—
What have we here?—is this the reverend man?

[*He takes up the candle, and surveys* GULLCRAMMER, *who strives to sustain the inspection with confidence, while fear obviously contends with conceit and desire to shew himself to the best advantage.*

GULLCRAMMER.

Kind sir—or, good my lord—my band is ruffled,
But yet 'twas fresh this morning. This fell shower
Hath somewhat smirch'd my cloak, but you may note
It rates five marks per yard; my doublet
Hath fairly 'scaped—'tis three-piled taffeta.

[*Opens his cloak, and displays his doublet.*

OSWALD.

A goodly inventory—Art thou a preacher?

GULLCRAMMER.

Yea—I laud Heaven and good Saint Mungo for it.

OSWALD.

'Tis the time's plague, when those that should weed follies
Out of the common field, have their own minds
O'errun with foppery—Envoys 'twixt heaven and earth,
Example should with precept join, to shew us
How we may scorn the world with all its vanities.

GULLCRAMMER.

Nay, the high heavens forefend that I were vain!

When our learn'd Principal such sounding laud
Gave to mine Essay on the hidden qualities
Of the sulphuric mineral, I disclaim'd
All self-exaltment. And (*turning to the women*) when at the dance,
The lovely Saccharissa Kirkencroft,
Daughter to Kirkencroft of Kirkencroft,
Graced me with her soft hand, credit me, ladies,
That still I felt myself a mortal man,
Though beauty smiled on me.

OSWALD.

Come, sir, enough of this.
That you're our guest to-night, thank the rough heavens,
And all our worser fortunes; be conformable
Unto my rules; these are no Saccharissas
To gild with compliments. There's in your profession,
As the best grain will have its piles of chaff,
A certain whiffler, who hath dared to bait
A noble maiden with love tales and sonnets;
And if I meet him, his Geneva cap
May scarce be proof to save his ass's ears.

KATLEEN (*aside*).

Umph—I am strongly tempted;
And yet I think I will be generous,
And give his brains a chance to save his bones.
Then there's more humour in our goblin plot,
Than in a simple drubbing.

ELEANOR (*apart to* FLORA).

What shall we do? If he discover him,
He 'll fling him out at window.

FLORA.

My father's hint to keep himself unknown
Is all too broad, I think, to be neglected.

ELEANOR.

But yet the fool, if we produce his bounty,
May claim the merit of presenting it;
And then we 're but lost women for accepting
A gift our needs made timely.

KATLEEN.

Do not produce them.
E'en let the fop go supperless to bed,
And keep his bones whole.

OSWALD (*to his Wife*).

Hast thou aught
To place before him ere he seek repose?

ELEANOR.

Alas! too well you know our needful fare
Is of the narrowest now, and knows no surplus.

OSWALD.

Shame us not with thy niggard housekeeping;
He is a stranger—were it our last crust,
And he the veriest coxcomb ere wore taffeta,
A pitch he 's little short of—he must share it,
Though all should want to-morrow.

GULLCRAMMER (*partly overhearing what passes between them*).

Nay, I am no lover of your sauced dainties:
Plain food and plenty is my motto still.
Your mountain air is bleak, and brings an appetite:
A soused sow's face, now, to my modest thinking,
Has ne'er a fellow. What think these fair ladies
Of a sow's face and sausages?

[*Makes signs to* ELEANOR.

FLORA.

Plague on the vulgar hind, and on his courtesies,
The whole truth will come out!

OSWALD.

What should they think, but that you 're like to lack
Your favourite dishes, sir, unless perchance
You bring such dainties with you.

GULLCRAMMER.

No, not *with* me; not, indeed,
Directly *with* me; but—Aha! fair ladies!

[*Makes signs again.*

KATLEEN.

He 'll draw the beating down—Were that the worst,
Heaven's will be done! [*Aside.*

OSWALD (*apart*).

What can he mean?—this is the veriest dog-whelp—
Still he 's a stranger, and the latest act
Of hospitality in this old mansion
Shall not be sullied.

GULLCRAMMER.

Troth, sir, I think, under the ladies' favour,
Without pretending skill in second-sight,
Those of my cloth being seldom conjurers——

OSWALD.

I 'll take my Bible-oath that thou art none. [*Aside.*

GULLCRAMMER.

I do opine, still with the ladies' favour,
That I could guess the nature of our supper:
I do not say in such and such precedence
The dishes will be placed; housewives, as you know,
On such forms have their fancies; but, I say still,
That a sow's face and sausages——

OSWALD.

Peace, sir!
O'er-driven jests (if this be one) are insolent.

FLORA (*apart, seeing her mother uneasy*).

The old saw still holds true—a churl's benefits,
Sauced with his lack of feeling, sense, and courtesy,
Savour like injuries.

[*A horn is winded without; then a loud knocking at the gate.*

LEONARD (*without*).

Ope, for the sake of love and charity!

[OSWALD *goes to the loop-hole.*

GULLCRAMMER.

Heaven's mercy! should there come another stranger,
And he half starved with wandering on the wolds,
The sow's face boasts no substance, nor the sausages,

To stand our reinforced attack! I judge, too,
By this starved Baron's language, there's no hope
Of a reserve of victuals.

FLORA.

Go to the casement, cousin.

KATLEEN.

Go yourself,
And bid the gallant who that bugle winded
Sleep in the storm-swept waste; as meet for him
As for Lance Blackthorn.—Come, I'll not distress you,
I'll get admittance for this second suitor,
And we'll play out this gambol at cross purposes.
But see, your father has prevented me.

OSWALD (*seems to have spoken with those without, and answers*).

Well, I will ope the door; one guest already,
Driven by the storm, has claim'd my hospitality,
And you, if you were fiends, were scarce less welcome
To this my mouldering roof, than empty ignorance
And rank conceit—I hasten to admit you. [*Exit.*

ELEANOR (*to* FLORA).

The tempest thickens. By that winded bugle,
I guess the guest that next will honour us.——
Little deceiver, that didst mock my troubles,
'Tis now thy turn to fear!

FLORA.

Mother, if I knew less or more of this
Unthought of and most perilous visitation,

I would your wishes were fulfill'd on me,
And I were wedded to a thing like yon.

GULLCRAMMER (*approaching*).

Come, ladies, now you see the jest is threadbare,
And you must own that same sow's face and sausages——

Re-enter OSWALD *with* LEONARD, *supporting* BAULDIE DURWARD. OSWALD *takes a view of them, as formerly of* GULLCRAMMER, *then speaks.*

OSWALD (*to* LEONARD).

By thy green cassock, hunting-spear, and bugle,
I guess thou art a huntsman?

LEONARD (*bowing with respect*).

A ranger of the neighbouring royal forest,
Under the good Lord Nithsdale; huntsman, therefore,
In time of peace, and when the land has war
To my best powers a soldier.

OSWALD.

Welcome, as either. I have loved the chase,
And was a soldier once.—This aged man,
What may he be?

DURWARD (*recovering his breath*).

Is but a beggar, sir, an humble mendicant,
Who feels it passing strange, that from this roof,
Above all others, he should now crave shelter.

OSWALD.

Why so? You're welcome both—only the word

Warrants more courtesy than our present means
Permit us to bestow. A huntsman and a soldier
May be a prince's comrade, much more mine;
And for a beggar—friend, there little lacks,
Save that blue gown and badge, and clouted pouches,
To make us comrades too; then welcome both,
And to a beggar's feast. I fear brown bread,
And water from the spring, will be the best on 't;
For we had cast to wend abroad this evening,
And left our larder empty.

GULLCRAMMER.

Yet, if some kindly fairy,
In our behalf, would search its hid recesses—
(*Apart*) We 'll not go supperless now—we 're three to one.—
Still do I say, that a sowsed face and sausages——

OSWALD (*looks sternly at him, then at his wife*).

There 's something under this, but that the present
Is not a time to question. (*To* ELEANOR). Wife, my mood
Is at such height of tide, that a turn'd feather
Would make me frantic now, with mirth or fury!
Tempt me no more—but if thou hast the things
This carrion crow so croaks for, bring them forth;
For, by my father's beard, if I stand caterer,
'Twill be a fearful banquet!

ELEANOR.

Your pleasure be obey'd—Come, aid me, Flora.

[*Exeunt.*

(During the following speeches the Women place dishes on the table).

OSWALD (*to* DURWARD).

How did you lose your path?

DURWARD.

E'en when we thought to find it, a wild meteor
Danced in the moss, and led our feet astray.—
I give small credence to the tales of old,
Of Friar's-lantern told, and Will-o'-Wisp,
Else would I say, that some malicious demon
Guided us in a round; for to the moat,
Which we had pass'd two hours since, were we led,
And there the gleam flicker'd and disappear'd,
Even on your drawbridge. I was so worn down,
So broke with labouring through marsh and moor,
That, wold I nold I, here my young conductor
Would needs implore for entrance; else, believe me,
I had not troubled you.

OSWALD.

And why not, father?—have you e'er heard aught,
Or of my house or me, that wanderers,
Whom or their roving trade or sudden circumstance
Oblige to seek a shelter, should avoid
The House of Devorgoil?

DURWARD.

Sir, I am English born—
Native of Cumberland. Enough is said
Why I should shun those bowers, whose lords were hostile

To English blood, and unto Cumberland
Most hostile, and most fatal.

OSWALD.

Ay, father. Once my grandsire plough'd, and harrow'd,
And sow'd with salt, the streets of your fair towns;
But what of that?—you have the 'vantage now.

DURWARD.

True, Lord of Devorgoil, and well believe I,
That not in vain we sought these towers to-night,
So strangely guided, to behold their state.

OSWALD.

Ay, thou wouldst say, 'twas fit a Cumbrian beggar
Should sit an equal guest in his proud halls,
Whose fathers beggar'd Cumberland—Graybeard, let it be so,
I'll not dispute it with thee.

(*To* LEONARD, *who was speaking to* FLORA, *but on being surprised, occupied himself with the suit of armour.*)

What makest thou there, young man?

LEONARD.

I marvell'd at this harness—it is larger
Than arms of modern days. How richly carved
With gold inlaid on steel—how close the rivets—
How justly fit the joints! I think the gauntlet
Would swallow twice my hand.

[*He is about to take down some part of the Armour.* OSWALD *interferes.*

OSWALD.

Do not displace it.

My grandsire, Erick, doubled human strength,
And almost human size—and human knowledge,
And human vice, and human virtue also,
As storm or sunshine chanced to occupy
His mental hemisphere. After a fatal deed,
He hung his armour on the wall, forbidding
It e'er should be ta'en down. There is a prophecy,
That of itself 'twill fall, upon the night
When, in the fiftieth year from his decease,
Devorgoil's feast is full. This is the era;
But, as too well you see, no meet occasion
Will do the downfall of the armour justice,
Or grace it with a feast. There let it bide,
Trying its strength with the old walls it hangs on,
Which shall fall soonest.

DURWARD (*looking at the trophy with a mixture of feeling*).

Then there stern Erick's harness hangs untouch'd,
Since his last fatal raid on Cumberland!

OSWALD.

Ay, waste and want, and recklessness—a comrade
Still yoked with waste and want—have stripp'd these walls
Of every other trophy. Antler'd skulls,
Whose branches vouch'd the tales old vassals told
Of desperate chases—partisans and spears—

Knights' barred helms and shields—the shafts and bows,
Axes and breastplates, of the hardy yeomanry—
The banners of the vanquish'd—signs these arms
Were not assumed in vain, have disappear'd.
Yes, one by one they all have disappear'd;
And now Lord Erick's harness hangs alone,
'Midst implements of vulgar husbandry
And mean economy; as some old warrior,
Whom want hath made an inmate of an alms-house,
Shews, 'mid the beggar'd spendthrifts, base mechanics,
And bankrupt pedlers, with whom fate has mix'd him.

DURWARD.

Or rather like a pirate, whom the prison-house,
Prime leveller next the grave, hath for the first time
Mingled with peaceful captives, low in fortunes,[1]
But fair in innocence.

OSWALD (*looking at* DURWARD *with surprise*).
Friend, thou art bitter!

DURWARD.

Plain truth, sir, like the vulgar copper coinage,
Despised amongst the gentry, still finds value
And currency with beggars.

OSWALD.

Be it so.
I will not trench on the immunities
I soon may claim to share. Thy features, too,

[1] [MS.—"Mingled with peaceful men, broken in fortunes."]

Though weather-beaten, and thy strain of language,
Relish of better days.[1] Come hither, friend,
[*They speak apart.*
And let me ask thee of thine occupation.

[LEONARD *looks round, and, seeing* OSWALD *engaged with* DURWARD, *and* GULLCRAMMER *with* ELEANOR, *approaches towards* FLORA, *who must give him an opportunity of doing so, with obvious attention on her part to give it the air of chance. The by-play here will rest with the Lady, who must engage the attention of the audience by playing off a little female hypocrisy and simple coquetry.*

LEONARD.

Flora——

FLORA.

Ay, gallant huntsman, may she deign to question
Why Leonard came not at the appointed hour;
Or why he came at midnight?

LEONARD.

Love has no certain loadstar, gentle Flora,
And oft gives up the helm to wayward pilotage.
To say the sooth—A beggar forced me hence.
And Will-o'-wisp did guide us back again.

FLORA.

Ay, ay, your beggar was the faded spectre
Of Poverty, that sits upon the threshold

[1] [MS.—"Both smack of better days," &c.]

Of these our ruin'd walls. I've been unwise,
Leonard, to let you speak so oft with me;
And you a fool to say what you have said.
E'en let us here break short; and, wise at length,
Hold each our separate way through life's wide ocean.

LEONARD.

Nay, let us rather join our course together,
And share the breeze or tempest, doubling joys,
Relieving sorrows, warding evils off
With mutual effort, or enduring them
With mutual patience.

FLORA.

This is but flattering counsel—sweet and baneful;
But mine had wholesome bitter in 't.

KATLEEN.

Ay, ay; but like the sly apothecary,
You 'll be the last to take the bitter drug
That you prescribe to others.

[*They whisper.* ELEANOR *advances to interrupt them, followed by* GULLCRAMMER.

ELEANOR.

What, maid, no household cares?—Leave to your elders
The task of filling passing strangers' ears
With the due notes of welcome.

GULLCRAMMER.

Be it thine,
O, Mistress Flora, the more useful talent
Of filling strangers' stomachs with substantials;

That is to say—for learn'd commentators
Do so expound substantials in some places—
With a sows'd bacon-face and sausages.

FLORA (*apart*).

Would thou wert sows'd, intolerable pedant,
Base, greedy, perverse, interrupting coxcomb!

KATLEEN.

Hush, coz, for we'll be well avenged on him,
And ere this night goes o'er, else woman's wit
Cannot o'ertake her wishes.

[*She proceeds to arrange seats.* OSWALD *and* DURWARD *come forward in conversation.*

OSWALD.

I like thine humour well.—So all men beg——

DURWARD.

Yes—I can make it good by proof. Your soldier
Begs for a leaf of laurel, and a line
In the Gazette. He brandishes his sword
To back his suit, and is a sturdy beggar—
The courtier begs a riband or a star,
And, like our gentler mumpers, is provided
With false certificates of health and fortune
Lost in the public service. For your lover,
Who begs a sigh, a smile, a lock of hair,
A buskin-point, he maunds upon the pad,
With the true cant of pure mendicity,
"The smallest trifle to relieve a Christian,
And if it like your ladyship!"——

[*In a begging tone.*

KATLEEN (*apart*).

This is a cunning knave, and feeds the humour
Of my aunt's husband, for I must not say
Mine honour'd uncle. I will try a question.—
Your man of merit though, who serves the commonwealth,
Nor asks for a requital?—— [*To* DURWARD.

DURWARD.

Is a dumb beggar,
And lets his actions speak like signs for him,
Challenging double guerdon.—Now, I 'll shew
How your true beggar has the fair advantage
O'er all the tribes of cloak'd mendicity
I have told over to you.—The soldier's laurel,
The statesman's riband, and the lady's favour,
Once won and gain'd, are not held worth a farthing
By such as longest, loudest, canted for them;
Whereas your charitable halfpenny,[1]
Which is the scope of a true beggar's suit,
Is worth *two* farthings, and, in times of plenty,
Will buy a crust of bread.

FLORA (*interrupting him, and addressing her father*).

Sir, let me be a beggar with the time,
And pray you come to supper.

ELEANOR (*to* OSWALD, *apart*).

Must *he* sit with us? [*Looking at* DURWARD.

OSWALD.

Ay, ay, what else—since we are beggars all?

[MS. —"Whereas your genuine copper halfpenny."]

When cloaks are ragged, sure their worth is equal,
Whether at first they were of silk or woollen.

ELEANOR.

Thou art scarce consistent.
This day thou didst refuse a princely banquet,
Because a new-made lord was placed above thee;
And now——

OSWALD.

Wife, I have seen, at public executions,
A wretch that could not brook the hand of violence
Should push him from the scaffold, pluck up courage,
And, with a desperate sort of cheerfulness,
Take the fell plunge himself—
Welcome then, beggars, to a beggar's feast!

GULLCRAMMER (*who has in the meanwhile seated himself*).

But this is more.—A better countenance—
Fair fall the hands that sows'd it!—than this hog's,
Or prettier provender than these same sausages
(By what good friend sent hither, shall be nameless,
Doubtless some youth whom love hath made profuse),
[*Smiling significantly at* ELEANOR *and* FLORA.
No prince need wish to peck at. Long, I ween,
Since that the nostrils of this house (by metaphor,
I mean the chimneys) smell'd a steam so grateful—
By your good leave I cannot dally longer.
[*Helps himself.*

OSWALD (*places* DURWARD *above* GULLCRAMMER).

Meanwhile, sir,

Please it your youthful learning to give place
To gray hairs and to wisdom; and, moreover,
If you had tarried for the benediction——

GULLCRAMMER (*somewhat abashed*).
I said grace to myself.

OSWALD (*not minding him*).
—And waited for the company of others,
It had been better fashion. Time has been,
I should have told a guest at Devorgoil,
Bearing himself thus forward, he was saucy.

[*He seats himself, and helps the company and himself in dumb-show. There should be a contrast betwixt the precision of his aristocratic civility, and the rude under-breeding of* GULLCRAMMER.

OSWALD (*having tasted the dish next him*).
Why, this is venison, Eleanor!

GULLCRAMMER.
Eh! What! Let's see—
[*Pushes across* OSWALD *and helps himself.*
It may be venison—
I'm sure 'tis not beef, veal, mutton, lamb, or pork.
Eke am I sure, that be it what it will,
It is not half so good as sausages,
Or as a sow's face sows'd.

OSWALD.
Eleanor, whence all this?——

ELEANOR.
Wait till to-morrow

You shall know all. It was a happy chance
That furnish'd us to meet so many guests. [*Fills wine.*
Try if your cup be not as richly garnish'd
As is your trencher.[1]

KATLEEN (*apart*).

My aunt adheres to the good cautious maxim
Of—"Eat your pudding, friend, and hold your tongue."

OSWALD (*tastes the wine*).

It is the grape of Bordeaux.
Such dainties, once familiar to my board,
Have been estranged from 't long.
[*He again fills his glass, and continues to speak as he holds it up.*
Fill round, my friends—here is a treacherous friend now
Smiles in your face, yet seeks to steal the jewel,
Which is distinction between man and brute—
I mean our reason—this he does, and smiles.
But are not all friends treacherous?—one shall cross you
Even in your dearest interests — one shall slander you—
This steal your daughter, that defraud your purse;
But this gay flask of Bordeaux will but borrow
Your sense of mortal sorrows for a season,
And leave, instead, a gay delirium.

[1] Wooden trenchers should be used, and the quaigh, a Scottish drinking-cup.

Methinks my brain, unused to such gay visitants,
The influence feels already!—we will revel!—
Our banquet shall be loud!—it is our last.
Katleen, thy song.

KATLEEN.

Not now, my lord—I mean to sing to-night
For this same moderate, grave, and reverend clergyman;
I 'll keep my voice till then.

ELEANOR.

Your round refusal shews but cottage breeding.

KATLEEN.

Ay, my good aunt, for I was cottage-nurtured,
And taught, I think, to prize my own wild will
Above all sacrifice to compliment.
Here is a huntsman—in his eyes I read it,
He sings the martial song my uncle loves,
What time fierce Claver'se with his Cavaliers,
Abjuring the new change of government,
Forcing his fearless way through timorous friends,
And enemies as timorous, left the capital
To rouse in James's cause the distant Highlands.
Have you ne'er heard the song, my noble uncle?

OSWALD.

Have I not heard, wench?—It was I rode next him,
'Tis thirty summers since—rode by his rein;
We marched on through the alarm'd city,
As sweeps the osprey through a flock of gulls,
Who scream and flutter, but dare no resistance

Against the bold sea-empress—They did murmur,
The crowds before us, in their sullen wrath,
And those whom we had pass'd, gathering fresh courage,
Cried havoc in the rear—we minded them
E'en as the brave bark minds the bursting billows,
Which, yielding to her bows, burst on her sides,
And ripple in her wake.—Sing me that strain,
[*To* LEONARD.
And thou shalt have a meed I seldom tender,
Because they 're all I have to give—my thanks.

LEONARD.

Nay, if you 'll bear with what I cannot help,
A voice that 's rough with hollowing to the hounds,
I 'll sing the song even as old Rowland taught me.

SONG.[1]

AIR—"*The Bonnets of Bonny Dundee.*"

To the Lords of Convention 'twas Claver'se who spoke,
"Ere the King's crown shall fall there are crowns to be broke;

[1] ["Dundee, enraged at his enemies, and still more at his friends, resolved to retire to the Highlands, and to make preparations for civil war, but with secrecy; for he had been ordered by James to make no public insurrection until assistance should be sent him from Ireland.

"Whilst Dundee was in this temper, information was brought him, whether true or false is uncertain, that some of the Covenanters had associated themselves to assassinate him, in revenge for his former severities against their party. He flew to the Convention and demanded justice. The Duke of Hamilton, who wished to get rid of a troublesome adversary, treated his complaint with neglect; and in order to sting him in the tenderest part, reflected upon that courage which could be alarmed by imaginary dangers. Dundee left the house in a rage, mounted his horse, and with a troop of fifty horsemen who had deserted to him from

So let each Cavalier who loves honour and me,
Come follow the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.

"Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can,
Come saddle your horses, and call up your men;
Come open the West Port, and let me gang free,
And it 's room for the bonnets of Bonny Dundee!"

his regiment in England, galloped through the city. Being asked by one of his friends, who stopt him, 'Where he was going?' he waved his hat, and is reported to have answered, 'Wherever the spirit of Montrose shall direct me.' In passing under the walls of the Castle, he stopt, scrambled up the precipice at a place difficult and dangerous, and held a conference with the Duke of Gordon at a postern-gate, the marks of which are still to be seen, though the gate itself is built up. Hoping, in vain, to infuse the vigour of his own spirit into the Duke, he pressed him to retire with him into the Highlands, raise his vassals there, who were numerous, brave, and faithful, and leave the command of the castle to Winram, the Lieutenant-governor, an officer on whom Dundee could rely. The Duke concealed his timidity under the excuse of a soldier. 'A soldier,' said he, 'cannot in honour quit the post that is assigned him.' The novelty of the sight drew numbers to the foot of the rock upon which the conference was held. These numbers every minute increased, and, in the end, were mistaken in the city for Dundee's adherents. The Convention was then sitting: news were carried thither that Dundee was at the gates with an army, and had prevailed upon the governor of the Castle to fire upon the town. The Duke of Hamilton, whose intelligence was better, had the presence of mind, by improving the moment of agitation, to overwhelm the one party and provoke the other, by their fears. He ordered the doors of the house to be shut, and the keys to be laid on the table before him. He cried out, 'That there was danger within as well as without doors; that traitors must be held in confinement until the present danger was over: but that the friends of liberty had nothing to fear, for that thousands were ready to start up in their defence, at the stamp of his foot.' He ordered the drums to be beat and the trumpets to sound through the city. In an instant vast swarms of those who had been brought into town by him and Sir John Dalrymple from the western counties, and who had been hitherto hid in garrets and cellars, shewed themselves in the streets; not, indeed, in the proper habiliments of war, but in arms, and with looks fierce and sullen, as if they felt disdain at their former concealment. This unexpected sight increased the noise and tumult of the town, which grew loudest in the square

Dundee he is mounted, he rides up the street,
The bells are rung backward, the drums they are beat;
But the Provost, douce man, said "Just e'en let him be,
The Gude Town is weel quit of that Deil of Dundee."
Come fill up my cup, &c.

As he rode down the sanctified bends of the Bow,
Ilk carline was flyting and shaking her pow;
But the young plants of grace they look'd couthie and slee,
Thinking, luck to thy bonnet, thou Bonny Dundee!
Come fill up my cup, &c.

With sour-featured Whigs the Grassmarket was cramm'd,
As if half the West had set tryst to be hang'd;[1]
There was spite in each look, there was fear in each ee,
As they watch'd for the bonnets of Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, &c.

These cowls of Kilmarnock had spits and had spears,
And lang-hafted gullies to kill Cavaliers;
But they shrunk to close-heads, and the causeway was free,
At the toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, &c.

He spurr'd to the foot of the proud Castle rock,
And with the gay Gordon he gallantly spoke;

adjoining to the house where the members were confined, and appeared still louder to those who were within, because they were ignorant of the cause from which the tumult arose, and caught contagion from the anxious looks of each other. After some hours, the doors were thrown open, and the Whig members, as they went out, were received with acclamations, and those of the opposite party with the threats and curses of a *prepared* populace. Terrified by the prospect of future alarms, many of the adherents of James quitted the Convention, and retired to the country; most of them changed sides; only a very few of the most resolute continued their attendance."—*Dalrymple's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 305.]

[1] [Previous to 1784, the Grassmarket was the common place of execution at Edinburgh.]

"Let Mons Meg and her marrows speak twa words or three,
For the love of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee."
Come fill up my cup, &c.

The Gordon demands of him which way he goes—
"Where'er shall direct me the shade of Montrose!
Your Grace in short space shall hear tidings of me,
Or that low lies the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, &c.

"There are hills beyond Pentland, and lands beyond Forth,
If there 's lords in the Lowlands, there 's chiefs in the North;
There are wild Duniewassals three thousand times three,
Will cry *hoigh!* for the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, &c.

"There 's brass on the target of barken'd bull-hide,
There 's steel in the scabbard that dangles beside;
The brass shall be burnish'd, the steel shall flash free,
At a toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, &c.

"Away to the hills, to the caves, to the rocks—
Ere I own an usurper, I 'll couch with the fox;
And tremble, false Whigs, in the midst of your glee,
You have not seen the last of my bonnet and me!"
Come fill up my cup, &c.

He waved his proud hand, and the trumpets were blown,
The kettle-drums clash'd, and the horsemen rode on,
Till on Ravelston's cliffs and on Clermiston's lee,
Died away the wild war-notes of Bonny Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can,
Come saddle the horses and call up the men,
Come open your gates, and let me gae free,
For it 's up with the bonnets of Bonny Dundee!

ELEANOR.

Katleen, do thou sing now. Thy uncle's cheerful;
We must not let his humour ebb again.

KATLEEN.

But I 'll do better, aunt, than if I sung,
For Flora can sing blithe; so can this huntsman,
As he has shewn e'en now; let them duet it.

OSWALD.

Well, huntsman, we must give to freakish maiden
The freedom of her fancy.—Raise the carol,
And, Flora, if she can, will join the measure.

SONG.

When friends are met o'er merry cheer,
And lovely eyes are laughing near,
And in the goblet's bosom clear
The cares of day are drown'd;
When puns are made, and bumpers quaff'd,
And wild Wit shoots his roving shaft,
And Mirth his jovial laugh has laugh'd,
Then is our banquet crown'd,
Ah gay,
Then is our banquet crown'd.

When glees are sung, and catches troll'd,
And bashfulness grows bright and bold,
And beauty is no longer cold,
And age no longer dull;
When chimes are brief, and cocks do crow,
To tell us it is time to go,
Yet how to part we do not know,
Then is our feast at full,
Ah gay,
Then is our feast at full.

OSWALD (*rises with the cup in his hand*).

Devorgoil's feast is full—
Drink to the pledge!

[*A tremendous burst of thunder follows these words of the Song; and the lightning should seem to strike the suit of black Armour, which falls with a crash.*[1] *All rise in surprise and fear except* GULLCRAMMER, *who tumbles over backwards, and lies still.*

OSWALD.

That sounded like the judgment-peal—the roof
Still trembles with the volley.

DURWARD.

Happy those
Who are prepared to meet such fearful summons.—
Leonard, what dost thou there?

LEONARD (*supporting* FLORA).

The duty of a man—
Supporting innocence. Were it the final call,
I were not misemploy'd.

OSWALD.

The armour of my grandsire hath fall'n down,
And old saws have spoke truth.—(*Musing.*) The fiftieth year—
Devorgoil's feast at fullest! What to think of it——

[1] I should think this may be contrived, by having a transparent zigzag in the flat-scene, immediately above the armour, suddenly and very strongly illuminated.

LEONARD (*lifting a scroll which had fallen with the armour*).

This may inform us.

[*Attempts to read the manuscript, shakes his head, and gives it to* OSWALD.

But not to eyes unlearn'd it tells its tidings.

OSWALD.

Hawks, hounds, and revelling consumed the hours
I should have given to study.

[*Looks at the manuscript.*

These characters I spell not more than thou.
They are not of our day, and, as I think,
Not of our language.—Where 's our scholar now,
So forward at the banquet? Is he laggard
Upon a point of learning?

LEONARD.

Here is the man of letter'd dignity,
E'en in a piteous case.

[*Drags* GULLCRAMMER *forward.*

OSWALD.

Art waking, craven? canst thou read this scroll?
Or art thou only learn'd in sowsing swine's flesh,
And prompt in eating it?

GULLCRAMMER.

Eh—ah!—oh—ho!—Have you no better time
To tax a man with riddles, than the moment
When he scarce knows whether he 's dead or living?

OSWALD.

Confound the pedant!—Can you read the scroll,

Or can you not, sir?—if you *can*, pronounce
Its meaning speedily.

GULLCRAMMER.

Can I read it, quotha!
When at our learned University,
I gain'd first premium for Hebrew learning—
Which was a pound of high-dried Scottish snuff,
And half a peck of onions, with a bushel
Of curious oatmeal—our learn'd Principal
Did say, "Melchisedek, thou canst do any thing!"
Now comes he with his paltry scroll of parchment,
And, "*Can* you read it?"—After such affront,
The point is, if I *will*.

OSWALD.

A point soon solved,
Unless you choose to sleep among the frogs;
For look you, sir, there is the chamber window,
Beneath it lies the lake.

ELEANOR.

Kind Master Gullcrammer, beware my husband,
He brooks no contradiction—'tis his fault,
And in his wrath he's dangerous.

GULLCRAMMER (*looks at the scroll, and mutters as if reading*).

Hashgaboth hotch-potch—.
A simple matter this to make a rout of—
Ten rashersen bacon, mish-mash venison,
Sausagian sowsed-face—'Tis a simple catalogue
Of our small supper—made by the grave sage
Whose prescience knew this night that we should feast

On venison, hash'd sow's face, and sausages,
And hung his steel-coat for a supper-bell—
E'en let us to our provender again,
For it is written we shall finish it,
And bless our stars the lightning left it us.

OSWALD.

This must be impudence or ignorance!—
The spirit of rough Erick stirs within me,
And I will knock thy brains out if thou palterest;
Expound the scroll to me!

GULLCRAMMER.

You're over-hasty;
And yet you may be right too—'Tis Samaritan,
Now I look closer on't, and I did take it
For simple Hebrew.

DURWARD.

'Tis Hebrew to a simpleton,
That we see plainly, friend—Give me the scroll.

GULLCRAMMER.

Alas, good friend! what would you do with it?

DURWARD (*takes it from him*).

My best to read it, sir—The character is Saxon,
Used at no distant date within this district;
And thus the tenor runs—nor in Samaritan,
Nor simple Hebrew, but in wholesome English:

Devorgoil, thy bright moon waneth,
And the rust thy harness staineth;
Servile guests the banquet soil
Of the once proud Devorgoil.
But should Black Erick's armour fall,

Look for guests shall scare you all!
They shall come ere peep of day—
Wake and watch, and hope and pray.

KATLEEN (*to* FLORA).

Here is fine foolery—an old wall shakes
At a loud thunder-clap—down comes a suit
Of ancient armour, when its wasted braces
Were all too rotten to sustain its weight—
A beggar cries out, Miracle! and your father,
Weighing the importance of his name and lineage,
Must needs believe the dotard![1]

FLORA.

Mock not, I pray you; this may be too serious.

KATLEEN.

And if I live till morning, I will have
The power to tell a better tale of wonder
Wrought on wise Gullcrammer. I'll go prepare me.
[*Exit.*

FLORA.

I have not Katleen's spirit, yet I hate
This Gullcrammer too heartily, to stop
Any disgrace that's hasting towards him.

OSWALD (*to whom the Beggar has been again reading the scroll*).

'Tis a strange prophecy!—The silver moon,

[1] [MS.—"A begging knave cries out, a Miracle!
And your good sire, doting on the importance
Of his high birth and house, must needs believe him."]

Now waning sorely, is our ancient bearing—
Strange and unfitting guests—

GULLCRAMMER (*interrupting him*).

Ay, ay, the matter
Is, as you say, all moonshine in the water.

OSWALD.

How mean you, sir? (*threatening.*)

GULLCRAMMER.

To shew that I can rhyme
With yonder bluegown. Give me breath and time,
I will maintain, in spite of his pretence,
Mine exposition had the better sense—
It spoke good victuals and increase of cheer;
And his, more guests to eat what we have here—
An increment right needless.

OSWALD.

Get thee gone;
To kennel, hound!

GULLCRAMMER.

The hound will have his bone.

[*Takes up the platter of meat, and a flask.*

OSWALD.

Flora, shew him his chamber—take him hence,
Or, by the name I bear, I'll see his brains!

GULLCRAMMER.

Ladies, good night!—I spare you, sir, the pains.

[*Exit, lighted by* FLORA *with a lamp.*

OSWALD.

The owl is fled.—I'll not to bed to-night;

There is some change impending o'er this house,
For good or ill. I would some holy man
Were here, to counsel us what we should do!
Yon witless thin-faced gull is but a cassock
Stuff'd out with chaff and straw.

DURWARD (*assuming an air of dignity*).
I have been wont,
In other days, to point to erring mortals
The rock which they should anchor on.

[*He holds up a Cross—the rest take a posture of devotion, and the Scene closes.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A ruinous Anteroom in the Castle—Enter KATLEEN, *fantastically dressed to play the Character of Cockledemoy, with the Visor in her hand.*

KATLEEN.

I've scarce had time to glance at my sweet person,
Yet this much could I see, with half a glance,
My elfish dress becomes me—I'll not mask me
Till I have seen Lance Blackthorn—Lance! I say—
[*Calls.*
Blackthorn, make haste!

Enter BLACKTHORN, *half dressed as Owlspiegle.*

BLACKTHORN.

Here am I—Blackthorn in the upper half,
Much at your service; but my nether parts
Are goblinized and Owlspiegled. I had much ado
To get these trankums on. I judge Lord Erick
Kept no good house, and starved his quondam barber.

KATLEEN.

Peace, ass, and hide you—Gullcrammer is coming;

He left the hall before, but then took fright,
And e'en sneak'd back. The Lady Flora lights him—
Trim occupation for her ladyship!
Had you seen Leonard, when she left the hall
On such fine errand!

BLACKTHORN.

This Gullcrammer shall have a bob extraordinary
For my good comrade's sake.—But tell me, Katleen,
What dress is this of yours?

KATLEEN.

A page's, fool!

BLACKTHORN.

I'm accounted no great scholar,
But 'tis a page that I would fain peruse
A little closer. [*Approaches her.*

KATLEEN.

Put on your spectacles,
And try if you can read it at this distance,
For you shall come no nearer.

BLACKTHORN.

But is there nothing, then, save rank imposture,
In all these tales of goblinry at Devorgoil?

KATLEEN.

My aunt's grave lord thinks otherwise, supposing
That his great name so interests the Heavens,
That miracles must needs bespeak its fall—
I would that I were in a lowly cottage

Beneath the greenwood, on its walls no armour
To court the levin-bolt——

BLACKTHORN.

And a kind husband, Katleen,
To ward such dangers as must needs come nigh.—
My father's cottage stands so low and lone,
That you would think it solitude itself;
The greenwood shields it from the northern blast,
And, in the woodbine round its latticed casement,
The linnet's sure to build the earliest nest
In all the forest.

KATLEEN.

Peace, you fool, they come.

FLORA *lights* GULLCRAMMER *across the Stage.*

KATLEEN (*when they have passed*).

Away with you—
On with your cloak—be ready at the signal.

BLACKTHORN.

And shall we talk of that same cottage, Katleen,
At better leisure?—I have much to say
In favour of my cottage.

KATLEEN.

If you will be talking,
You know I can't prevent you.

BLACKTHORN.

That's enough.
(*Aside.*) I shall have leave, I see, to spell the page
A little closer, when the due time comes.

SCENE II.

Scene changes to GULLCRAMMER'S *Sleeping Apartment —He enters, ushered in by* FLORA, *who sets on the table a flask, with the lamp.*

FLORA.

A flask, in case your Reverence be athirsty;
A light, in case your Reverence be afear'd;—
And so sweet slumber to your Reverence.

GULLCRAMMER.

Kind Mrs Flora, will you?—eh! eh! eh!

FLORA.

Will I what?

GULLCRAMMER.

Tarry a little?

FLORA (*smiling*).

Kind Master Gullcrammer,
How can you ask me aught so unbecoming?

GULLCRAMMER.

Oh, fie, fie, fie!—Believe me, Mistress Flora,
'Tis not for that—but being guided through
Such dreary galleries, stairs, and suites of rooms,
To this same cubicle, I 'm somewhat loath
To bid adieu to pleasant company.

FLORA.

A flattering compliment!—In plain truth you are frighten'd.

GULLCRAMMER.

What! frighten'd?—I—I—am not timorous.

FLORA.

Perhaps you've heard this is our haunted chamber?
But then it is our best—Your Reverence knows,
That in all tales which turn upon a ghost,
Your traveller belated has the luck
To enjoy the haunted room—it is a rule:—
To some it were a hardship, but to you,
Who are a scholar, and not timorous——

GULLCRAMMER.

I did not say I was not timorous,
I said I was not temerarious.—
I'll to the hall again.

FLORA.

You'll do your pleasure.
But you have somehow moved my father's anger,
And you had better meet our playful Owlspiegle—
So is our goblin call'd—than face Lord Oswald.

GULLCRAMMER.

Owlspiegle?—
It is an uncouth and outlandish name,
And in mine ear sounds fiendish.

FLORA.

Hush, hush, hush! [merry spirit;
Perhaps he hears us now—(*in an under tone*)—A
None of your elves that pinch folks black and blue,
For lack of cleanliness.

GULLCRAMMER.

As for that, Mistress Flora,

My taffeta doublet hath been duly brush'd,
My shirt hebdomadal put on this morning.

FLORA.

Why, you need fear no goblins. But this Owlspiegle
Is of another class;—yet has his frolics;
Cuts hair, trims beards, and plays amid his antics
The office of a sinful mortal barber.
Such is at least the rumour.

GULLCRAMMER.

He will not cut my clothes, or scar my face,
Or draw my blood?

FLORA.

Enormities like these
Were never charged against him.

GULLCRAMMER.

And, Mistress Flora, would you smile on me,
If, prick'd by the fond hope of your approval,
I should endure this venture?

FLORA.

I do hope
I shall have cause to smile.

GULLCRAMMER.

Well! in that hope
I will embrace the achievement for thy sake.
[*She is going.*
Yet, stay, stay, stay!—on second thoughts I will not—
I've thought on it, and will the mortal cudgel
Rather endure than face the ghostly razor!
Your crab-tree's tough but blunt—your razor's polish'd,

But, as the proverb goes, 'tis cruel sharp.
I 'll to thy father, and unto his pleasure
Submit these destined shoulders.

FLORA.

But you shall not,
Believe me, sir, you shall not; he is desperate,
And better far be trimm'd by ghost or goblin,
Than by my sire in anger; there are stores
Of hidden treasure, too, and Heaven knows what,
Buried among these ruins—you shall stay. [piegle,
(*Apart.*) And if indeed there be such sprite as Owls-
And, lacking him, that thy fear plague thee not
Worse than a goblin, I have miss'd my purpose,
Which else stands good in either case.—Good-night,
sir. [*Exit, and double-locks the door.*

GULLCRAMMER.

Nay, hold ye, hold!—Nay, gentle Mistress Flora,
Wherefore this ceremony?—She has lock'd me in,
And left me to the goblin!—(*Listening.*)—So, so, so!
I hear her light foot trip to such a distance,
That I believe the castle's breadth divides me
From human company. I 'm ill at ease—
But if this citadel (*Laying his hand on his stomach*)
were better victual'd,
It would be better mann'd. [*Sits down and drinks.*
She has a footstep light, and taper ankle. [*Chuckles.*
Aha! that ankle! yet, confound it too,
But for those charms Melchisedek had been
Snug in his bed at Mucklewhame—I say,

Confound her footstep, and her instep too,
To use a cobbler's phrase.—There I was quaint.
Now, what to do in this vile circumstance,
To watch or go to bed, I can't determine;
Were I a-bed, the ghost might catch me napping,
And if I watch, my terrors will increase
As ghostly hours approach. I'll to my bed
E'en in my taffeta doublet, shrink my head
Beneath the clothes—leave the lamp burning there,
[*Sets it on the table.*
And trust to fate the issue.

[*He lays aside his cloak, and brushes it, as from habit, starting at every moment; ties a napkin over his head; then shrinks beneath the bed-clothes. He starts once or twice, and at length seems to go to sleep. A bell tolls* ONE. *He leaps up in his bed.*

GULLGRAMMER.

I had just coax'd myself to sweet forgetfulness,
And that confounded bell—I hate all bells,
Except a dinner-bell—and yet I lie, too—
I love the bell that soon shall tell the parish
Of Gabblegoose, Melchisedek's incumbent—
And shall the future minister of Gabblegoose,
Whom his parishioners will soon require
To exorcise their ghosts, detect their witches,
Lie shivering in his bed for a pert goblin,
Whom, be he switch'd or cocktailed, horn'd or poll'd,
A few tight Hebrew words will soon send packing?

Tush! I will rouse the parson up within me,
And bid defiance——(*A distant noise.*) In the name
of Heaven,
What sounds are these!—O Lord! this comes of
rashness!

[*Draws his head down under the bed-clothes.*

Duet without, between OWLSPIEGLE *and* COCKLEDEMOY.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Cockledemoy!
My boy, my boy——

COCKLEDEMOY.

Here, father, here.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Now the pole-star's red and burning,
And the witch's spindle turning,
Appear, appear!

GULLCRAMMER (*who has again raised himself, and listened with great terror to the Duet*).

I have heard of the devil's dam before,
But never of his child. Now, Heaven deliver me!
The Papists have the better of us there—
They have their Latin prayers, cut and dried,
And pat for such occasion—I can think
On nought but the vernacular.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Cockledemoy!
My boy, my boy,
We'll sport us here—

COCKLEDEMOY.

Our gambols play,
Like elve and fay;

OWLSPIEGLE.

And domineer,

BOTH.

Laugh, frolic, and frisk, till the morning appear.

COCKLEDEMOY.

Lift latch—open clasp—
Shoot bolt—and burst hasp!

[*The door opens with violence. Enter* BLACKTHORN *as* OWLSPIEGLE, *fantastically dressed as a Spanish Barber, tall, thin, emaciated, and ghostly;* FLORA, *as* COCKLEDEMOY, *attends as his Page. All their manners, tones, and motions, are fantastic, as those of Goblins. They make two or three times the circuit of the Room, without seeming to see* GULLCRAMMER. *They then resume their Chant, or Recitative.*

OWLSPIEGLE.

Cockledemoy!
My boy, my boy,
What wilt thou do that will give thee joy?
Wilt thou ride on the midnight owl?

COCKLEDEMOY.

No; for the weather is stormy and foul.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Cockledemoy!
My boy, my boy,
What wilt thou do that can give thee joy?

With a needle for a sword, and a thimble for a hat,
Wilt thou fight a traverse with the castle cat?

COCKLEDEMOY.

Oh, no! she has claws, and I like not that.

GULLCRAMMER.

I see the devil is a doating father,
And spoils his children—'tis the surest way
To make cursed imps of them. They see me not—
What will they think on next? It must be own'd,
They have a dainty choice of occupations.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Cockledemoy!
My boy, my boy,
What shall we do that can give thee joy?
Shall we go seek for a cuckoo's nest?

COCKLEDEMOY.

That's best, that's best!

BOTH.

About, about,
Like an elvish scout,
The cuckoo's a gull, and we'll soon find him out.

[*They search the room with mops and mows. At length* COCKLEDEMOY *jumps on the bed.* GULLCRAMMER *raises himself half up, supporting himself by his hands.* COCKLEDEMOY *does the same, and grins at him, then skips from the bed, and runs to* OWLSPIEGLE.

COCKLEDEMOY.

I've found the nest,
And in it a guest,
With a sable cloak and a taffeta vest;

He must be wash'd, and trimm'd, and dress'd,
To please the eyes he loves the best.

OWLSPIEGLE.

That 's best, that 's best.

BOTH.

He must be shaved, and trimm'd, and dress'd,
To please the eyes he loves the best.

[*They arrange shaving things on the table, and sing as they prepare them.*

BOTH.

Know that all of the humbug, the bite, and the buz,
Of the make-believe world, becomes forfeit to us.

OWLSPIEGLE (*sharpening his razor*).

The sword this is made of was lost in a fray
By a fop, who first bullied and then ran away;
And the strap, from the hide of a lame racer, sold
By Lord Match, to his friend, for some hundreds in gold.

BOTH.

For all of the humbug, the bite, and the buz,
Of the make-believe world, becomes forfeit to us.

COCKLEDEMOY (*placing the napkin*).

And this cambric napkin, so white and so fair,
At an usurer's funeral I stole from the heir.

[*Drops something from a vial, as going to make suds.*

This dewdrop I caught from one eye of his mother,
Which wept while she ogled the parson with t'other.

BOTH.

For all of the humbug, the bite, and the buz,
Of the make-believe world, becomes forfeit to us.

OWLSPIEGLE (*arranging the lather and the basin*).

My soap-ball is of the mild alkali made,
Which the soft dedicator employs in his trade;
And it froths with the pith of a promise, that 's sworn
By a lover at night, and forgot on the morn.

BOTH.

For all of the humbug, the bite, and the buz,
Of the make-believe world, becomes forfeit to us.
Halloo, halloo,
The blackcock crew,
Thrice shriek'd hath the owl, thrice croak'd hath the raven,
Here, ho! Master Gullcrammer, rise and be shaven!

Da capo.

GULLCRAMMER (*who has been observing them*).

I'll pluck a spirit up; they 're merry goblins,
And will deal mildly. I will soothe their humour;
Besides, my beard lacks trimming.

[*He rises from his bed, and advances with great symptoms of trepidation, but affecting an air of composure. The Goblins receive him with fantastic ceremony.*

Gentlemen, 'tis your will I should be trimm'd
E'en do your pleasure. (*They point to a seat—he sits.*)
Think, howsoe'er,
Of me as one who hates to see his blood;
Therefore I do beseech you, signior,
Be gentle in your craft. I know those barbers,
One would have harrows driven across his visnomy,
Rather than they should touch it with a razor.

OWLSPIEGLE *shaves* GULLCRAMMER, *while* COCKLEDEMOY *sings.*

Father never started hair,
Shaved too close, or left too bare—
Father's razor slips as glib
As from courtly tongue a fib.
Whiskers, mustache, he can trim in
Fashion meet to please the women;
Sharp's his blade, perfumed his lather—
Happy those are trimm'd by father!

GULLCRAMMER.

That's a good boy. I love to hear a child
Stand for his father, if he were the devil.

[*He motions to rise.*

Craving your pardon, sir.—What! sit again?
My hair lacks not your scissors.

[OWLSPIEGLE *insists on his sitting.*

Nay, if you're peremptory, I'll ne'er dispute it,
Nor eat the cow and choke upon the tail—
E'en trim me to your fashion.

[OWLSPIEGLE *cuts his hair, and shaves his head, ridiculously.*

COCKLEDEMOY (*sings as before*).

Hair-breadth 'scapes, and hair-breadth snares,
Hare-brain'd follies, ventures, cares,
Part when father clips your hairs.
If there is a hero frantic,
Or a lover too romantic;—
If threescore seeks second spouse,
Or fourteen lists lover's vows,
Bring them here—for a Scotch boddle,
Owlspiegle shall trim their noddle.

[*They take the napkin from about* GULLCRAMMER'S *neck. He makes bows of acknowledgment, which they return fantastically, and sing—*

Thrice crow'd hath the blackcock, thrice croak'd hath the raven,
And Master Melchisedek Gullcrammer 's shaven!

GULLCRAMMER.

My friends, you are too musical for me;
But though I cannot cope with you in song,
I would, in humble prose, enquire of you,
If that you will permit me to acquit
Even with the barber's pence the barber's service?
[*They shake their heads.*
Or if there is aught else that I can do for you,
Sweet Master Owlspiegle, or your loving child,
The hopeful Cockle'moy?

COCKLEDEMOY.

Sir, you have been trimm'd of late,
Smooth 's your chin, and bald your pate,;
Lest cold rheums should work you harm,
Here 's a cap to keep you warm.

GULLCRAMMER.

Welcome, as Fortunatus' wishing-cap,
For 'twas a cap that I was wishing for.
(There I was quaint in spite of mortal terror.)
[*As he puts on the cap, a pair of ass's ears disengage themselves.*
Upon my faith, it is a dainty head-dress,

And might become an alderman!—Thanks, sweet Monsieur,
Thou 'rt a considerate youth.

[*Both Goblins bow with ceremony to* GULLCRAMMER, *who returns their salutation.* OWLSPIEGLE *descends by the trap-door,* COCKLEDEMOY *springs out at window.*

SONG (*without*).

OWLSPIEGLE.

Cockledemoy, my hope, my care,
Where art thou now, O tell me where?

COCKLEDEMOY.

Up in the sky,
On the bonny dragonfly,
Come, father, come you too—
She has four wings and strength enow,
And her long body has room for two.

GULLCRAMMER.

Cockledemoy now is a naughty brat—
Would have the poor old stiff-rumped devil, his father,
Peril his fiendish neck. All boys are thoughtless.

SONG.

OWLSPIEGLE.

Which way didst thou take?

COCKLEDEMOY.

I have fall'n in the lake—
Help, father, for Beelzebub's sake.'

GULLCRAMMER.

The imp is drown'd—a strange death for a devil—
O, may all boys take warning, and be civil;
Respect their loving sires, endure a chiding,
Nor roam by night on dragonflies a-riding!

COCKLEDEMOY (*sings*).

Now merrily, merrily, row I to shore,
My bark is a bean-shell, a straw for an oar.

OWLSPIEGLE (*sings*).

My life, my joy,
My Cockledemoy!

GULLCRAMMER.

I can bear this no longer—thus children are spoil'd.
[*Strikes into the tune.*

Master Owlspiegle, hoy!
He deserves to be whipp'd, like Cockledemoy!

[*Their voices are heard as if dying away.*

GULLCRAMMER.

They're gone!—Now, am I scared, or am I not?
I think the very desperate ecstasy
Of fear has given me courage.[1] This is strange now.
When they were here, I was not half so frighten'd
As now they re gone—they were a sort of company.
What a strange thing is use—A horn, a claw,
The tip of a fiend's tail, was wont to scare me.

[1] ["Cowards, upon necessity, assume
A fearful bravery; thinking by this face
To fasten in men's minds that they have courage."
SHAKSPEARE.]

Now am I with the devil hand and glove;
His soap has lather'd, and his razor shaved me;
I've joined him in a catch, kept time and tune,
Could dine with him, nor ask for a long spoon;
And if I keep not better company,
What will become of me when I shall die? [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A Gothic Hall, waste and ruinous. The moonlight is at times seen through the shafted windows.[1] *Enter* KATLEEN *and* BLACKTHORN—*They have thrown off the more ludicrous parts of their disguise.*

KATLEEN.

This way—this way; was ever fool so gull'd!

BLACKTHORN.

I play'd the barber better than I thought for.
Well, I've an occupation in reserve,
When the long bow and merry musket fail me.—
But, hark ye, pretty Katleen.

KATLEEN.

What should I hearken to?

BLACKTHORN.

Art thou not afraid,

[1] I have a notion that this can be managed so as to represent imperfect or flitting moonlight, upon the plan of the Eidophusikon.

In these wild halls while playing feigned goblins,
That we may meet with real ones?

KATLEEN.

Not a jot.
My spirit is too light, my heart too bold,
To fear a visit from the other world.

BLACKTHORN.

But is not this the place, the very hall,
In which men say that Oswald's grandfather,
The black Lord Erick, walks his penance round?
Credit me, Katleen, these half-moulder'd columns
Have in their ruin something very fiendish,
And, if you'll take an honest friend's advice,
The sooner that you change their shatter'd splendour
For the snug cottage that I told you of,
Believe me, it will prove the blither dwelling.

KATLEEN.

If I e'er see that cottage, honest Blackthorn,
Believe me, it shall be from other motive
Than fear of Erick's spectre.

[*A rustling sound is heard.*

BLACKTHORN.

I heard a rustling sound—
Upon my life, there's something in the hall,
Katleen, besides us two!

KATLEEN.

A yeoman thou,
A forester, and frighten'd! I am sorry

I gave the fool's-cap to poor Gullcrammer,
And let thy head go bare.

[*The same rushing sound is repeated.*

BLACKTHORN.

Why, are you mad, or hear you not the sound?

KATLEEN.

And if I do, I take small heed of it.
Will you allow a maiden to be bolder
Than you, with beard on chin and sword at girdle?

BLACKTHORN.

Nay, if I had my sword, I would not care;
Though I ne'er heard of master of defence,
So active at his weapon as to brave
The devil, or a ghost—See! see! see yonder!

[*A Figure is imperfectly seen between two of the pillars.*

KATLEEN.

There's something moves, that's certain, and the moonlight,
Chased by the flitting gale, is too imperfect
To shew its form; but, in the name of God,
I'll venture on it boldly.

BLACKTHORN.

Wilt thou so?
Were I alone, now, I were strongly tempted
To trust my heels for safety; but with thee,
Be it fiend or fairy, I'll take risk to meet it.

KATLEEN.

It stands full in our path, and we must pass it,
Or tarry here all night.

BLACKTHORN.

In its vile company?

[*As they advance towards the Figure, it is more plainly distinguished, which might, I think, be contrived by raising successive screens of crape. The Figure is wrapped in a long robe, like the mantle of a Hermit, or Palmer.*

PALMER.

Ho! ye who thread by night these wildering scenes,
In garb of those who long have slept in death,
Fear ye the company of those you imitate?

BLACKTHORN.

This is the devil, Katleen, let us fly! [*Runs off.*

KATLEEN.

I will not fly—why should I? My nerves shake
To look on this strange vision, but my heart
Partakes not the alarm.—If thou dost come in Heaven's name,
In Heaven's name art thou welcome!

PALMER.

I come, by Heaven permitted. Quit this castle:
There is a fate on 't—if for good or evil,
Brief space shall soon determine. In that fate,
If good, by lineage thou canst nothing claim;
If evil, much mayst suffer.—Leave these precincts.

KATLEEN.

Whate'er thou art, be answer'd—Know, I will not
Desert the kinswoman who train'd my youth;
Know, that I will not quit my friend, my Flora;

Know, that I will not leave the aged man
Whose roof has shelter'd me. This is my resolve—
If evil come, I aid my friends to bear it;
If good, my part shall be to see them prosper,
A portion in their happiness from which
No fiend can bar me.

PALMER.

Maid, before thy courage,
Firm built on innocence, even beings of nature
More powerful far than thine, give place and way;
Take then this key, and wait the event with courage.

[*He drops the key.—He disappears gradually —the moonlight failing at the same time.*

KATLEEN (*after a pause*).

Whate'er it was, 'tis gone! My head turns round—
The blood that lately fortified my heart
Now eddies in full torrent to my brain,
And makes wild work with reason. I will haste,
If that my steps can bear me so far safe,
To living company. What if I meet it
Again in the long aisle, or vaulted passage?
And if I do, the strong support that bore me
Through this appalling interview, again
Shall strengthen and uphold me.

[*As she steps forward she stumbles over the key.*

What's this? The key?—there may be mystery in't.
I'll to my kinswoman, when this dizzy fit
Will give me leave to choose my way aright.

[*She sits down exhausted.*

Re-enter BLACKTHORN, *with a drawn sword and torch.*

BLACKTHORN.

Katleen! What, Katleen!—What a wretch was I
To leave her!—Katleen—I am weapon'd now,
And fear nor dog nor devil.—She replies not!
Beast that I was—nay, worse than beast; the stag,
As timorous as he is, fights for his hind.
What 's to be done?—I 'll search this cursed castle
From dungeon to the battlements; if I find her not,
I 'll fling me from the highest pinnacle——

KATLEEN (*who has somewhat gathered her spirits, in consequence of his entrance, comes behind and touches him; he starts*).

Brave sir!
I 'll spare you that rash leap—You 're a bold woodsman!
Surely I hope that from this night henceforward
You 'll never kill a hare, since you 're akin to them;
O I could laugh—but that my head 's so dizzy.

BLACKTHORN.

Lean on me, Katleen—By my honest word,
I thought you close behind—I was surprised,
Not a jot frighten'd.

KATLEEN.

Thou art a fool to ask me to thy cottage,
And then to shew me at what slight expense
Of manhood I might master thee and it.

BLACKTHORN.

I'll take the risk off that—This goblin business
Came rather unexpected; the best horse
Will start at sudden sights. Try me again,
And if I prove not true to bonny Katleen,
Hang me in mine own bowstring. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The Scene returns to the Apartment at the beginning of Act Second. OSWALD *and* DURWARD *are discovered with* ELEANOR, FLORA, *and* LEONARD. DURWARD *shuts a Prayer-book, which he seems to have been reading.*

DURWARD.

'Tis true—the difference betwixt the churches,
Which zealots love to dwell on, to the wise
Of either flock are of far less importance
Than those great truths to which all Christian men
Subscribe with equal reverence.

OSWALD.

We thank thee, father, for the holy office,
Still best performed when the pastor's tongue
Is echo to his breast; of jarring creeds
It ill beseems a layman's tongue to speak.—
Where have you stowed yon prater? [*To* FLORA.

FLORA.

Safe in the goblin-chamber.

ELEANOR.

The goblin-chamber!
Maiden, wert thou frantic?—if his Reverence
Have suffer'd harm by waspish Owlspiegle,
Be sure thou shalt abuy it.

FLORA.

Here he comes,
Can answer for himself!

Enter GULLCRAMMER, *in the fashion in which* OWLSPIEGLE *had put him: having the fool's-cap on his head, and towel about his neck, &c. His manner through the scene is wild and extravagant, as if the fright had a little affected his brain.*

DURWARD.

A goodly spectacle!—Is there such a goblin?
(*To* OSWALD.) Or has sheer terror made him such a figure?

OSWALD.

There is a sort of wavering tradition
Of a malicious imp who teazed all strangers;
My father wont to call him Owlspiegle.

GULLCRAMMER.

Who talks of Owlspiegle?
He is an honest fellow for a devil,
So is his son, the hopeful Cockle'moy.

(*Sings.*)

"My hope, my joy,
My Cockledemoy!"

LEONARD.

The fool's bewitch'd—the goblin hath furnish'd him
A cap which well befits his reverend wisdom.

FLORA.

If I could think he had lost his slender wits,
I should be sorry for the trick they play'd him.

LEONARD.

O fear him not; it were a foul reflection
On any fiend of sense and reputation,
To filch such petty wares as his poor brains.

DURWARD.

What saw'st thou, sir? What heard'st thou?

GULLCRAMMER.

What wast I saw and heard?
That which old graybeards,
Who conjure Hebrew into Anglo-Saxon,
To cheat starved barons with, can little guess at.

FLORA.

If he begin so roundly with my father,
His madness is not like to save his bones.

GULLCRAMMER.

Sirs, midnight came, and with it came the goblin.
I had reposed me after some brief study;
But as the soldier, sleeping in the trench,
Keeps sword and musket by him, so I had
My little Hebrew manual prompt for service.

FLORA.

Sausagian sows'd-face; that much of your Hebrew
Even I can bear in memory.

GULLCRAMMER.

We counter'd,
The goblin and myself, even in mid-chamber,
And each stepp'd back a pace, as 'twere to study
The foe he had to deal with!—I bethought me,
Ghosts ne'er have the first word, and so I took it,
And fired a volley of round Greek at him.
He stood his ground, and answer'd in the Syriac;
I flank'd my Greek with Hebrew, and compell'd him—
[*A noise heard.*

OSWALD.

Peace, idle prater!—Hark—what sounds are these?
Amid the growling of the storm without,
I hear strange notes of music, and the clash
Of coursers' trampling feet.

VOICES (*without*).

We come, dark riders of the night,
And flit before the dawning light;
Hill and valley, far aloof,
Shake to hear our chargers' hoof;
But not a foot-stamp on the green
At morn shall shew where we have been.

OSWALD.

These must be revellers belated—
Let them pass on; the ruin'd halls of Devorgoil
Open to no such guests.—

[*Flourish of trumpets at a distance, then nearer.*

They sound a summons;
What can they lack at this dead hour of night?
Look out, and see their number, and their bearing.

LEONARD (*goes up to the window*).

'Tis strange—one single shadowy form alone
Is hovering on the drawbridge—far apart
Flit through the tempest banners, horse, and riders,
In darkness lost, or dimly seen by lightning.—
Hither the figure moves—the bolts revolve—
The gate uncloses to him.

ELEANOR.

Heaven protect us!

The PALMER *enters*—GULLGRAMMER *runs off.*

OSWALD.

Whence and what art thou?—for what end come hither?

PALMER.

I come from a far land, where the storm howls not,
And the sun sets not, to pronounce to thee,
Oswald of Devorgoil, thy house's fate.

DURWARD.

I charge thee in the name we late have kneel'd to——

PALMER.

Abbot of Lanercost, I bid thee peace!
Uninterrupted let me do mine errand:
Baron of Devorgoil, son of the bold, the proud,

The warlike and the mighty, wherefore wear'st thou
The habit of a peasant?—Tell me, wherefore
Are thy fair halls thus waste—thy chambers bare—
Where are the tapestries, where the conquer'd banners,
Trophies, and gilded arms, that deck'd the walls
Of once proud Devorgoil?

[*He advances, and places himself where the Armour hung, so as to be nearly in the centre of the Scene.*

DURWARD.

Whoe'er thou art—if thou dost know so much,
Needs must thou know——

OSWALD.

Peace! I will answer here; to me he spoke.—
Mysterious stranger, briefly I reply:
A peasant's dress befits a peasant's fortune;
And 'twere vain mockery to array these walls
In trophies, of whose memory nought remains,
Save that the cruelty outvied the valour
Of those who wore them.

PALMER.

Degenerate as thou art,
Knowst thou to whom thou sayst this?

[*He drops his mantle, and is discovered armed as nearly as may be to the suit which hung on the wall; all express terror.*

OSWALD.

It is himself—the spirit of mine Ancestor!

ERICK.

Tremble not, son, but hear me!

[*He strikes the wall, it opens and discovers the Treasure-Chamber.*

There lies piled
The wealth I brought from wasted Cumberland,
Enough to reinstate thy ruin'd fortunes.—
Cast from thine high-born brows that peasant bonnet,
Throw from thy noble grasp the peasant's staff,
O'er all, withdraw thine hand from that mean mate,
Whom in an hour of reckless desperation
Thy fortunes cast thee on. This do,
And be as great as ere was Devorgoil,
When Devorgoil was richest![1]

DURWARD.

Lord Oswald, thou art tempted by a fiend,
Who doth assail thee on thy weakest side—
Thy pride of lineage, and thy love of grandeur.
Stand fast—resist—contemn his fatal offers!

ELEANOR.

Urge him not, father; if the sacrifice
Of such a wasted woe-worn wretch as I am,
Can save him from the abyss of misery,
Upon whose verge he 's tottering, let me wander
An unacknowledged outcast from his castle,
Even to the humble cottage I was born in.

[1] [MS.—"And be as rich as ere was Devorgoil,
When Devorgoil was proudest."]

OSWALD.

No, Ellen, no—it is not thus they part,
Whose hearts and souls, disasters borne in common
Have knit together, close as summer saplings
Are twined in union by the eddying tempest.—
Spirit of Erick, while thou bear'st his shape,
I 'll answer with no ruder conjuration
Thy impious counsel, other than with these words,
Depart, and tempt me not!

ERICK.

Then Fate will have her course—Fall, massive grate,
Yield them the tempting view of these rich treasures,
But bar them from possession!

[*A portcullis falls before the door of the Treasure-Chamber.*

Mortals, hear!
No hand may ope that grate, except the Heir
Of plunder'd Aglionby, whose mighty wealth,
Ravish'd in evil hour, lies yonder piled—
And not his hand prevails without the key
Of black Lord Erick—brief space is given
To save proud Devorgoil.—So wills high Heaven.

[*Thunder—he disappears.*

DURWARD.

Gaze not so wildly—you have stood the trial
That his commission bore—and Heaven designs,
If I may spell his will, to rescue Devorgoil
Even by the Heir of Aglionby—Behold him

In that young forester, unto whose hand
Those bars shall yield the treasures of his house,
Destined to ransom yours.—Advance, young Leonard,
And prove the adventure.

LEONARD (*advances and attempts the grate*).

It is fast
As is the tower, rock-seated.

OSWALD.

We will fetch other means, and prove its strength,
Nor starve in poverty with wealth before us.

DURWARD.

Think what the vision spoke;
The key—the fated key——

Enter GULLCRAMMER.

GULLCRAMMER.

A key?—I say a quay is what we want,
Thus by the learn'd orthographized—Q, u, a, y.
The lake is overflow'd!—A quay, a boat,
Oars, punt, or sculler, is all one to me!—
We shall be drown'd, good people!!!

Enter KATLEEN *and* BLACKTHORN.

KATLEEN.

Deliver us!
Haste, save yourselves—the lake is rising fast.[1]

[1] If it could be managed to render the rising of the lake visible, it would answer well for a *coup-de-théâtre*.

BLACKTHORN.

'T has risen my bow's height in the last five minutes,
And still is swelling strangely.

GULLCRAMMER (*who has stood astonished upon seeing them*).

We shall be drown'd without your kind assistance.
Sweet Master Owlspiegle, your dragonfly—
Your straw; your bean-stalk, gentle Cockle'moy!

LEONARD (*looking from the shot-hole*).

'Tis true, by all that 's fearful! The proud lake
Peers, like ambitious tyrant, o'er his bounds,
And soon will whelm the castle—even the drawbridge
Is under water now.

KATLEEN.

Let us escape! Why stand you gazing there?

DURWARD.

Upon the opening of that fatal grate
Depends the fearful spell that now entraps us,
The key of Black Lord Erick—ere we find it,
The castle will be whelm'd beneath the waves,
And we shall perish in it!

KATLEEN (*giving the key*).

Here, prove this;
A chance most strange and fearful gave it me.

OSWALD (*puts it into the lock, and attempts to turn it—a loud clap of thunder*).

FLORA.

The lake still rises faster.—Leonard, Leonard,
Canst thou not save us!

[LEONARD *tries the lock—it opens with a violent noise, and the Portcullis rises. A loud strain of wild music.—There may be a Chorus here.*

[OSWALD *enters the Apartment, and brings out a scroll.*

LEONARD.

The lake is ebbing with as wondrous haste
As late it rose—the drawbridge is left dry!

OSWALD.

This may explain the cause.—
(GULLCRAMMER *offers to take it.*) But soft you, sir,
We'll not disturb your learning for the matter;
Yet, since you've borne a part in this strange drama,
You shall not go unguerdon'd. Wise or learn'd,
Modest or gentle, Heaven alone can make thee,
Being so much otherwise; but from this abundance
Thou shalt have that shall gild thine ignorance,
Exalt thy base descent, make thy presumption
Seem modest confidence, and find thee hundreds
Ready to swear that same fool's-cap of thine
Is reverend as a mitre.

GULLCRAMMER.

Thanks, mighty baron, now no more a bare one!—
I will be quaint with him, for all his quips. [*Aside.*

OSWALD.

Nor shall kind Katleen lack
Her portion in our happiness.

KATLEEN.

Thanks, my good lord, but Katleen's fate is fix'd—
There is a certain valiant forester,
Too much afear'd of ghosts to sleep anights
In his lone cottage, without one to guard him.—

LEONARD.

If I forget my comrade's faithful friendship,
May I be lost to fortune, hope, and love!

DURWARD.

Peace, all! and hear the blessing which this scroll
Speaks unto faith, and constancy, and virtue.
No more this castle's troubled guest,
Dark Erick's spirit hath found rest.
The storms of angry Fate are past—
For Constancy defies their blast.
Of Devorgoil the daughter free
Shall wed the Heir of Aglionby;
Nor ever more dishonour soil
The rescued house of Devorgoil![1]

END OF THE DOOM OF DEVORGOIL.

[1] [MS.—"The storms of angry Fate are past—
Constancy abides their blast.
Of Devorgoil the daughter fair
Shall wed with Dacre's injured heir;
The silver moon of Devorgoil."]

AUCHINDRANE;

OR,

THE AYRSHIRE TRAGEDY.

Cur aliquid vidi? cur noxia lumina feci
Cur imprudenti cognita culpa mihi est?
Ovidii Tristium, Liber Secundus.

PREFACE.

THERE is not, perhaps, upon record, a tale of horror which gives us a more perfect picture than is afforded by the present, of the violence of our ancestors, or the complicated crimes into which they were hurried, by what their wise, but ill-enforced laws, termed the heathenish and accursed practice of Deadly Feud. The Author has tried to extract some dramatic scenes out of it; but he is conscious no exertions of his can increase the horror of that which is in itself so iniquitous. Yet if we look at modern events, we must not too hastily venture to conclude that our own times have so much the superiority over former days as we might at first be tempted to infer. One great object has been obtained. The power of the laws extends over the country universally, and if criminals at present sometimes escape punishment, this can

only be by eluding justice—not, as of old, by defying it.

But the motives which influence modern ruffians to commit actions at which we pause with wonder and horror, arise, in a great measure, from the thirst of gain. For the hope of lucre, we have seen a wretch seduced to his fate, under the pretext that he was to share in amusement and conviviality; and, for gold, we have seen the meanest of wretches deprived of life, and their miserable remains cheated of the grave.

The loftier, if equally cruel, feelings of pride, ambition, and love of vengeance, were the idols of our forefathers, while the caitiffs of our day bend to Mammon, the meanest of the spirits who fell.[1] The criminals, therefore, of former times, drew their hellish inspiration from a loftier source than is known to modern villains. The fever of unsated ambition, the frenzy of ungratified revenge, the *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum*, stigmatized by our jurists and our legislators, held life but as

[1] ["——— Mammon led them on:
Mammon, the least erected spirit that fell
From Heaven."—MILTON.]

passing breath; and such enormities as now sound like the acts of a madman, were then the familiar deeds of every offended noble. With these observations we proceed to our story.

John Muir, or Mure, of Auchindrane, the contriver and executor of the following cruelties, was a gentleman of an ancient family and good estate in the west of Scotland; bold, ambitious, treacherous to the last degree, and utterly unconscientious—a Richard the Third in private life, inaccessible alike to pity and to remorse. His veiw was to raise the power, and extend the grandeur, of his own family. This gentleman had married the daughter of Sir Thomas Kennedy of Barganie, who was, excepting the Earl of Cassilis, the most important person in all Carrick, the district of Ayrshire which he inhabited, and where the name of Kennedy held so great a sway as to give rise to the popular rhyme—

"'Twixt Wigton and the town of Air,
Portpatrick and the Cruives of Cree,
No man need think for to bide there,
Unless he court Saint Kennedie."

Now, Mure of Auchindrane, who had promised

himself high advancement by means of his father-in-law Barganie, saw, with envy and resentment, that his influence remained second and inferior to the House of Cassilis, chief of all the Kennedys. The Earl was indeed a minor, but his authority was maintained, and his affairs well managed, by his uncle, Sir Thomas Kennedy of Cullayne, the brother to the deceased Earl, and tutor and guardian to the present. This worthy gentleman supported his nephew's dignity and the credit of the house so effectually, that Barganie's consequence was much thrown into the shade, and the ambitious Auchindrane, his son-in-law, saw no better remedy than to remove so formidable a rival as Cullayne by violent means.

For this purpose, in the year of God 1597, he came with a party of followers to the town of Maybole (where Sir Thomas Kennedy of Cullayne then resided), and lay in ambush in an orchard, through which he knew his destined victim was to pass, in returning homewards from a house where he was engaged to sup. Sir Thomas Kennedy came alone, and unattended, when he was fired upon by Auchindrane and his accom-

plices, who, having missed their aim, drew their swords, and rushed upon him to slay him. But the party thus assailed at disadvantage, had the good-fortune to hide himself for that time in a ruinous house, where he lay concealed till the inhabitants of the place came to his assistance.

Sir Thomas Kennedy prosecuted Mure for this assault, who, finding himself in danger from the law, made a sort of apology and agreement with the Lord of Cullayne, to whose daughter he united his eldest son, in testimony of the closest friendship in future. This agreement was sincere on the part of Kennedy, who, after it had been entered into, shewed himself Auchindrane's friend and assistant on all occasions. But it was most false and treacherous on that of Mure, who continued to nourish the purpose of murdering his new friend and ally on the first opportunity.

Auchindrane's first attempt to effect this, was by means of the young Gilbert Kennedy of Barganie (for old Barganie, Auchindrane's father-in-law, was dead), whom he persuaded to brave the Earl of Cassilis, as one who usurped an undue influence over the rest of the name. Accordingly,

this hot-headed youth, at the instigation of Auchindrane, rode past the gate of the Earl of Cassilis, without waiting on his chief, or sending him any message of civility. This led to mutual defiance, being regarded by the Earl, according to the ideas of the time, as a personal insult. Both parties took the field with their followers, at the head of about two hundred and fifty men on each side. The action which ensued was shorter and less bloody than might have been expected. Young Barganie, with the rashness of headlong courage, and Auchindrane, fired by deadly enmity to the House of Cassilis, made a precipitate attack on the Earl, whose men were strongly posted and under cover. They were received by a heavy fire. Barganie was slain. Mure of Auchindrane, severely wounded in the thigh, became unable to sit his horse, and, the leaders thus slain or disabled, their party drew off without continuing the action. It must be particularly observed, that Sir Thomas Kennedy remained neuter in this quarrel, considering his connexion with Auchindrane as too intimate to be broken even by his desire to assist his nephew.

For this temperate and honourable conduct he met a vile reward; for Auchindrane, in resentment of the loss of his relative Barganie, and the downfall of his ambitious hopes, continued his practices against the life of Sir Thomas of Cullayne, though totally innocent of contributing to either. Chance favoured his wicked purpose.

The Knight of Cullayne, finding himself obliged to go to Edinburgh on a particular day, sent a message by a servant to Mure, in which he told him, in the most unsuspecting confidence, the purpose of his journey, and named the road which he proposed to take, inviting Mure to meet him at Duppill, to the west of the town of Ayr, a place appointed, for the purpose of giving him any commissions which he might have for Edinburgh, and assuring his treacherous ally he would attend to any business which he might have in the Scottish metropolis as anxiously as to his own. Sir Thomas Kennedy's message was carried to the town of Maybole, where his messenger, for some trivial reason, had the import committed to writing by a schoolmaster in that town, and despatched it to its destination by means of a poor student, named

Dalrymple, instead of carrying it to the house of Auchindrane in person.

This suggested to Mure a diabolical plot. Having thus received tidings of Sir Thomas Kennedy's motions, he conceived the infernal purpose of having the confiding friend who sent the information, waylaid and murdered at the place appointed to meet with him, not only in friendship, but for the purpose of rendering him service. He dismissed the messenger Dalrymple, cautioning the lad to carry back the letter to Maybole, and to say that he had not found him, Auchindrane, in his house. Having taken this precaution, he proceeded to instigate the brother of the slain Gilbert of Barganie, Thomas Kennedy of Drum-urghie by name, and Walter Mure of Cloncaird, a kinsman of his own, to take this opportunity of revenging Barganie's death. The fiery young men were easily induced to undertake the crime. They waylaid the unsuspecting Sir Thomas of Cullayne at the place appointed to meet the traitor Auchindrane, and the murderers having in company five or six servants, well mounted and armed, assaulted and cruelly murdered him with many wounds. They then

plundered the dead corpse of his purse, containing a thousand merks in gold, cut off the gold buttons which he wore on his coat, and despoiled the body of some valuable rings and jewels.[1]

[1] ["No papers which have hitherto been discovered appear to afford so striking a picture of the savage state of barbarism into which that country must have sunk, as the following Bond by the Earl of Cassilis, to his brother and heir-apparent, Hew, Master of Cassilis. The uncle of these young men, Sir Thomas Kennedy of Culzean, Tutor of Cassilis, as the reader will recollect, was murdered, May 11th, 1602, by Auchindrane's accomplices.

"The Master of Cassilis, for many years previous to that event, was in open hostility to his brother. During all that period, however, the Master maintained habits of the closest intimacy with Auchindrane and his dissolute associates, and actually joined him in various hostile enterprises against his brother the Earl. The occurrence of the Laird of Culzean's murder was embraced by their mutual friends, as a fitting opportunity to effect a permanent reconciliation between the brothers; 'bot' (as *The Historie of the Kennedies*, p. 59, quaintly informs us) 'the cuntry thocht that he wald not be eirnest in that cause, for the auld luiff betuix him and Auchindrayne.' The unprincipled Earl (whose *sobriquet*, and that of some of his ancestors, was *King of Carrick*, to denote the boundless sway which he exercised over his own vassals and the inhabitants of that district), relying on his brother's necessities, held out the infamous bribe contained in the following Bond, to induce his brother, the Master of Cassilis, to murder his former friend, the old Laird of Auchindrane. Though there be honour among thieves, it would seem that there is none among assassins;

The revenge due for his uncle's murder was keenly pursued by the Earl of Cassilis. As the murderers fled from trial, they were declared outlaws; which doom, being pronounced by three blasts of a horn, was called "being put to the horn, and declared the king's rebel." Mure of

for the younger brother insisted upon having the price of blood assured to him by a written document, drawn up in the form of a regular Bond!

"Judging by the Earl's former and subsequent history, he probably thought that, in *either* event, his purposes would be attained, by 'killing two birds with one stone.' On the other hand, however, it is but doing justice to the Master's acuteness, and the experience acquired under his quondam preceptor, Auchindrane, that we should likewise conjecture that, on his part, he would hold firm possession of the Bond, to be used as a checkmate against his brother, should he think fit afterwards to turn his heel upon him, or to attempt to betray him into the hands of justice.

"The following is a correct copy of the Bond granted by the Earl:—'We, Johne, Earle of Cassillis, Lord Kennedy, etc., bindis and oblissis ws, that howsovne our broder, Hew Kennedy of Brounstoun, with his complices, taikis the Laird of Auchindraneis lyf, that we sall mak guid and thankfull payment to him and thame, of the sowme of tuelff hundreth merkis, yeirlie, togidder with corne to sex horsis, ay and quhill[1] we ressaw[2] thame in houshald with our self: Beginning the first payment immediatlie efter thair committing of the said deid. Attour,[3]

[1] Aye and until. [2] Receive. [3] Moreover.

Auchindrane was strongly suspected of having been the instigator of the crime. But he conceived there could be no evidence to prove his guilt if he could keep the boy Dalrymple out of the way, who delivered the letter which made him acquainted with Cullayne's journey, and the place at which he meant to halt. On the contrary, he saw, that if the lad could be produced at the trial, it would afford ground of fatal presumption, since it could be then proved that persons so nearly connected with him as Kennedy and Cloncaird had left his house, and committed the murder at the very spot which Cullayne had fixed for their meeting.

To avoid this imminent danger Mure brought Dalrymple to his house, and detained him there for several weeks. But the youth tiring of this confinement, Mure sent him to reside with a friend,

howsovne we ressaw thame in houshald, we sall pay to the twa serwing gentillmen the feis, yeirlie, as our awin houshald serwandis. And heirto we obliss wa, vpoun our honour. Subscryvit with our hand, at Maybole, the ferd day of September 1602.

'JOHNE ERLE OFF CASSILLIS.'"

—*Pitcairn's Criminal Trials of Scotland*, vol. iii. p. 622.

Montgomery of Skellmorly, who maintained him under a borrowed name, amid the desert regions of the then almost savage island of Arran. Being confident in the absence of this material witness, Auchindrane, instead of flying, like his agents Drum-urghie and Cloncaird, presented himself boldly at the bar, demanded a fair trial, and offered his person in combat to the death against any of Lord Cassilis's friends who might impugn his innocence. This audacity was successful, and he was dismissed without trial.

Still, however, Mure did not consider himself safe, so long as Dalrymple was within the realm of Scotland; and the danger grew more pressing, when he learned that the lad had become impatient of the restraint which he sustained in the island of Arran, and returned to some of his friends in Ayrshire. Mure no sooner heard of this than he again obtained possession of the boy's person, and a second time concealed him at Auchindrane, until he found an opportunity to transport him to the Low Countries, where he contrived to have him enlisted in Buccleuch's regiment; trusting, doubtless, that

some one of the numerous chances of war might destroy the poor young man whose life was so dangerous to him.

But after five or six years' uncertain safety, bought at the expense of so much violence and cunning, Auchindrane's fears were exasperated into frenzy, when he found this dangerous witness, having escaped from all the perils of climate and battle, had left, or been discharged from, the Legion of Borderers, and had again accomplished his return to Ayrshire. There is ground to suspect that Dalrymple knew the nature of the hold which he possessed over Auchindrane, and was desirous of extorting from his fears some better provision than he had found either in Arran or the Netherlands. But if so, it was a fatal experiment to tamper with the fears of such a man as Auchindrane, who determined to rid himself effectually of this unhappy young man.

Mure now lodged him in a house of his own, called Chapeldonan, tenanted by a vassal and connexion of his called James Bannatyne. This man he commissioned to meet him at ten o'clock at night

on the sea-sands near Girvan, and bring with him the unfortunate Dalrymple, the object of his fear and dread. The victim seems to have come with Bannatyne without the least suspicion, though such might have been raised by the time and place appointed for the meeting. When Bannatyne and Dalrymple came to the appointed spot, Auchindrane met them, accompanied by his eldest son, James. Old Auchindrane having taken Bannatyne aside, imparted his bloody purpose of ridding himself of Dalrymple for ever, by murdering him on the spot. His own life and honour were, he said, endangered by the manner in which this inconvenient witness repeatedly thrust himself back into Ayrshire, and nothing could secure his safety but taking the lad's life, in which action he requested James Bannatyne's assistance. Bannatyne felt some compunction, and remonstrated against the cruel expedient, saying, it would be better to transport Dalrymple to Ireland, and take precautions against his return. While old Auchindrane seemed disposed to listen to this proposal, his son concluded that the time was

come for accomplishing the purpose of their meeting, and, without waiting the termination of his father's conference with Bannatyne, he rushed suddenly on Dalrymple, beat him to the ground, and, kneeling down on him, with his father's assistance accomplished the crime, by strangling the unhappy object of their fear and jealousy. Bannatyne, the witness, and partly the accomplice, of the murder, assisted them in their attempt to make a hole in the sand with a spade which they had brought on purpose, in order to conceal the dead body. But as the tide was coming in, the holes which they made filled with water before they could get the body buried, and the ground seemed, to their terrified consciences, to refuse to be accessory to concealing their crime. Despairing of hiding the corpse in the manner they proposed, the murderers carried it out into the sea as deep as they dared wade, and there abandoned it to the billows, trusting that a wind, which was blowing off the shore, would drive these remains of their crime out to sea, where they would never more be heard of. But the sea, as well as the land, seemed unwilling to conceal their cruelty. After floating for some

hours, or days, the dead body was, by the wind and tide, again driven on shore, near the very spot where the murder had been committed.

This attracted general attention, and when the corpse was known to be that of the same William Dalrymple whom Auchindrane had so often spirited out of the country, or concealed when he was in it, a strong and general suspicion arose, that this young person had met with foul play from the bold bad man who had shewn himself so much interested in his absence. It was always said, or supposed, that the dead body had bled at the approach of a grandchild of Mure of Auchindrane, a girl who, from curiosity, had come to look at a sight which others crowded to see. The bleeding of a murdered corpse at the touch of the murderer, was a thing at that time so much believed, that it was admitted as a proof of guilt; but I know no case, save that of Auchindrane, in which the phenomenon was supposed to be extended to the approach of the innocent kindred; nor do I think that the fact itself, though mentioned by ancient lawyers, was ever admitted to proof in the proceedings against Auchindrane.

It is certain, however, that Auchindrane found himself so much the object of suspicion from this new crime, that he resolved to fly from justice, and suffer himself to be declared a rebel and outlaw rather than face a trial. But his conduct in preparing to cover his flight with another motive than the real one, is a curious picture of the men and manners of the times. He knew well that if he were to shun his trial for the murder of Dalrymple, the whole country would consider him as a man guilty of a mean and disgraceful crime in putting to death an obscure lad, against whom he had no personal quarrel. He knew, besides, that his powerful friends, who would have interceded for him had his offence been merely burning a house, or killing a neighbour, would not plead for or stand by him in so pitiful a concern as the slaughter of this wretched wanderer.

Accordingly, Mure sought to provide himself with some ostensible cause for avoiding law, with which the feelings of his kindred and friends might sympathize; and none occurred to him so natural as an assault upon some friend and adherent of the Earl of Cassilis. Should he kill such a one, it

would be indeed an unlawful action, but so far from being infamous, would be accounted the natural consequence of the avowed quarrel between the families. With this purpose, Mure, with the assistance of a relative, of whom he seems always to have had some ready to execute his worst purposes, beset Hugh Kennedy of Garriehorne, a follower of the Earl's, against whom they had especial ill-will, fired their pistols at him, and used other means to put him to death. But Garriehorne, a stout-hearted man, and well armed, defended himself in a very different manner from the unfortunate Knight of Cullayne, and beat off the assailants, wounding young Auchindrane in the right hand, so that he wellnigh lost the use of it.

But though Auchindrane's purpose did not entirely succeed, he availed himself of it to circulate a report, that if he could obtain a pardon for firing upon his feudal enemy with pistols, weapons declared unlawful by act of Parliament, he would willingly stand his trial for the death of Dalrymple, respecting which he protested his total innocence. The King, however, was decidedly of opinion that

the Mures, both father and son, were alike guilty of both crimes, and used intercession with the Earl of Abercorn, as a person of power in those western counties, as well as in Ireland, to arrest and transmit them prisoners to Edinburgh. In consequence of the Earl's exertions, old Auchindrane was made prisoner, and lodged in the tolbooth of Edinburgh.

Young Auchindrane no sooner heard that his father was in custody, than he became as apprehensive of Bannatyne, the accomplice in Dalrymple's murder, telling tales, as ever his father had been of Dalrymple. He, therefore, hastened to him, and prevailed on him to pass over for a while to the neighbouring coast of Ireland, finding him money and means to accomplish the voyage, and engaging in the meantime to take care of his affairs in Scotland. Secure, as they thought, in this precaution, old Auchindrane persisted in his innocence, and his son found security to stand his trial. Both appeared with the same confidence at the day appointed, and braved the public justice, hoping to be put to a formal trial, in which Auchindrane reckoned upon an acquittal for want

of the evidence which he had removed. The trial was, however, postponed, and Mure, the elder was dismissed, under high security to return when called for.

But King James, being convinced of the guilt of the accused, ordered young Auchindrane, instead of being sent to trial, to be examined under the force of torture, in order to compel him to tell whatever he knew of the things charged against him. He was accordingly severely tortured; but the result only served to shew that such examinations are as useless as they are cruel. A man of weak resolution, or of a nervous habit, would probably have assented to any confession, however false, rather than have endured the extremity of fear and pain to which Mure was subjected. But young Auchindrane, a strong and determined ruffian, endured the torture with the utmost firmness, and by the constant audacity with which, in spite of the intolerable pain, he continued to assert his innocence, he spread so favourable an opinion of his case, that the detaining him in prison, instead of bringing him to open trial, was censured as severe and oppressive. James, however, remained

firmly persuaded of his guilt, and by an exertion of authority quite inconsistent with our present laws, commanded young Auchindrane to be still detained in close custody till further light could be thrown on these dark proceedings. He was detained accordingly by the King's express personal command, and against the opinion even of his privy counsellors. This exertion of authority was much murmured against.

In the meanwhile old Auchindrane, being, as we have seen, at liberty on pledges, skulked about in the west, feeling how little security he had gained by Dalrymple's murder, and that he had placed himself by that crime in the power of Bannatyne, whose evidence concerning the death of Dalrymple could not be less fatal than what Dalrymple might have told concerning Auchindrane's accession to the conspiracy against Sir Thomas Kennedy of Cullayne. But though the event had shewn the error of his wicked policy, Auchindrane could think of no better mode in this case than that which had failed in relation to Dalrymple. When any man's life became inconsistent with his own safety, no idea seems to have occurred to this inveterate ruffian, save

to murder the person by whom he might himself be in any way endangered. He therefore attempted the life of James Bannatyne by more agents than one. Nay, he had nearly ripened a plan, by which one Pennycuke was to be employed to slay Bannatyne, while, after the deed was done, it was devised that Mure of Auchnull, a connexion of Bannatyne, should be instigated to slay Pennycuke; and thus close up this train of murders by one, which, flowing in the ordinary course of deadly feud, should have nothing in it so particular as to attract much attention.

But the justice of Heaven would bear this complicated train of iniquity no longer. Bannatyne, knowing with what sort of men he had to deal, kept on his guard, and, by his caution, disconcerted more than one attempt to take his life, while another miscarried by the remorse of Pennycuke, the agent whom Mure employed. At length Bannatyne, tiring of this state of insecurity, and in despair of escaping such repeated plots, and also feeling remorse for the crime to which he had been accessory, resolved rather to submit himself to the severity of the law, than remain the object of the

principal criminal's practices. He surrendered himself to the Earl of Abercorn, and was transported to Edinburgh, where he confessed before the King and council all the particulars of the murder of Dalrymple, and the attempt to hide his body by committing it to the sea.

When Bannatyne was confronted with the two Mures before the Privy Council, they denied with vehemence every part of the evidence he had given, and affirmed that the witness had been bribed to destroy them by a false tale. Bannatyne's behaviour seemed sincere and simple, that of Auchindrane more resolute and crafty. The wretched accomplice fell upon his knees, invoking God to witness that all the land in Scotland could not have bribed him to bring a false accusation against a master whom he had served, loved, and followed in so many dangers, and calling upon Auchindrane to honour God by confessing the crime he had committed. Mure the elder, on the other hand, boldly replied, that he hoped God would not so far forsake him as to permit him to confess a crime of which he was innocent, and exhorted Bannatyne in his turn to

confess the practices by which he had been induced to devise such falsehoods against him.

The two Mures, father and son, were therefore put upon their solemn trial, along with Bannatyne, in 1611, and, after a great deal of evidence had been brought in support of Bannatyne's confession, all three were found guilty.[1] The elder Auchindrane was convicted of counselling and directing the murder of Sir Thomas Kennedy of Cullayne, and

[1] ["Efter the pronunceing and declairing of the quhilk determination and delyuerance of the saidis persones of Assyse, 'The Justice, in respect thairof,' be the mouth of Alexander Kennydie, dempster of Court, decernit and adiudget the saidis Johnne Mure of Auchindrane elder, James Mure of Auchindrane younger, his eldest sone and appeirand air, and James Bannatyne, callit of Chapel-Donane, and ilk ane of thame, to be tane to the mercat croce of the burcht of Edinburgh, and thair, upone ane scaffold, thair heidis to be strukin frome thair bodeyis: And all thair landis, heritages, takis, steidingis, rowmes, possessiones, teyndis, coirnes, cattell, insicht plenissing, guidis, geir, tytillis, proffeitis, commoditeis, and richtis quhatsumeuir, directlie or indirectlie pertening to thame, or ony of thame, at the committing of the saidis tressonabill Murthouris, or sensyne; or to the quilkis thay, or ony of thame, had richt, claim, or actioun, to be forfalt, escheit, and inbrocht to our souerane lordis vse; as culpable and convict of the saidis tressonabill crymes.'

"Quhilk was pronuncet for Dome."

Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. iii. p. 156.]

also of the actual murder of the lad Dalrymple, Bannatyne and the younger Mure were found guilty of the latter crime, and all three were sentenced to be beheaded. Bannatyne, however, the accomplice, received the King's pardon, in consequence of his voluntary surrender and confession. The two Mures were both executed. The younger was affected by the remonstrances of the clergy who attended him, and he confessed the guilt of which he was accused. The father, also, was at length brought to avow the fact, but in other respects died as impenitent as he had lived;—and so ended this dark and extraordinary tragedy.

The Lord Advocate of the day, Sir Thomas Hamilton, afterwards successively Earl of Melrose and of Haddington, seems to have busied himself much in drawing up a statement of this foul transaction, for the purpose of vindicating to the people of Scotland the severe course of justice observed by King James VI. He assumes the task in a high tone of prerogative law, and, on the whole, seems at a loss whether to attribute to Providence, or to his most Sacred Majesty, the

greatest share in bringing to light these mysterious villanies, but rather inclines to the latter opinion. There is, I believe, no printed copy of the intended tract, which seems never to have been published; but the curious will be enabled to judge of it, as it appears in the next *fasciculus* of Mr Robert Pitcairn's very interesting publications from the *Scottish Criminal Record*.[1]

The family of Auchindrane did not become extinct on the death of the two homicides. The last descendant existed in the eighteenth century, a poor and distressed man. The following anecdote shews that he had a strong feeling of his situation.

There was in front of the old castle a huge ash-tree, called the Dule-tree (*mourning-tree*) of Auchindrane, probably because it was the place where the Baron executed the criminals who fell under his jurisdiction. It is described as having been the finest tree of the neighbourhood. This

[1] [See an article in the *Quarterly Review*, February, 1831, on Mr Pitcairn's valuable collection, where Sir Walter Scott particularly dwells on the original documents connected with the story of Auchindrane; and where Mr Pitcairn's important services to the history of his profession, and of Scotland, are justly characterised.]

last representative of the family of Auchindrane had the misfortune to be arrested for payment of a small debt; and, unable to discharge it, was preparing to accompany the messenger (bailiff) to the jail of Ayr. The servant of the law had compassion for his prisoner, and offered to accept of this remarkable tree as of value adequate to the discharge of the debt. "What!" said the debtor; "Sell the Dule-tree of Auchindrane! I will sooner die in the worst dungeon of your prison." In this luckless character the line of Auchindrane ended. The family, blackened with the crimes of its predecessors, became extinct, and the estate passed into other hands.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

JOHN MURE OF AUCHINDRANE, *an Ayrshire Baron. He has been a follower of the Regent, Earl of Morton, during the Civil Wars, and hides an oppressive, ferocious, and unscrupulous disposition, under some prétences to strictness of life and doctrine, which, however, never influence his conduct. He is in danger from the law, owing to his having been formerly active in the assassination of the Earl of Cassilis.*

PHILIP MURE, *his Son, a wild, debauched Profligate, professing and practising a contempt for his Father's hypocrisy, while he is as fierce and licentious as Auchindrane himself.*

GIFFORD, *their relation, a Courtier.*

QUENTIN BLANE, *a Youth, educated for a Clergyman, but sent by* AUCHINDRANE *to serve in a Band of Auxiliaries in the Wars of the Netherlands, and lately employed as Clerk or Comptroller to the Regiment—Disbanded, however, and on his return to his native Country. He is of a mild, gentle, and rather feeble character, liable to be influenced by any person of stronger mind who will take the trouble to direct him. He is somewhat of a nervous temperament, varying from sadness to gaiety, according to the impulse of the moment; an amiable hypochondriac.*

HILDEBRAND, *a stout old Englishman, who, by feats of courage, has raised himself to the rank of Sergeant-Major (then of greater consequence than at present). He, too, has been disbanded, but cannot bring himself to believe that he has lost his command over his Regiment.*

ABRAHAM,
WILLIAMS,
JENKIN,
And Others,

Privates dismissed from the same Regiment in which QUENTIN *and* HILDEBRAND *had served. These are mutinous, and are much disposed to remember former quarrels with their late Officers.*

NIEL MACLELLAN, *Keeper of Auchindrane Forest and Game.*

EARL OF DUNBAR, *commanding an Army as Lieutenant of James I., for execution of Justice on Offenders.*

Guards, Attendants, &c. &c.

MARION, *Wife of* NIEL MACLELLAN.

ISABEL, *their Daughter, a Girl of six years old.*

Other Children and Peasant Women.

AUCHINDRANE;

OR,

THE AYRSHIRE TRAGEDY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A rocky Bay on the Coast of Carrick, in Ayrshire, not far from the Point of Turnberry. The Sea comes in upon a bold rocky Shore. The remains of a small half-ruined Tower are seen on the right hand, overhanging the Sea. There is a Vessel at a distance in the offing. A Boat at the bottom of the Stage lands eight or ten Persons, dressed like disbanded, and in one or two cases like disabled Soldiers. They come straggling forward with their knapsacks and bundles. HILDEBRAND, *the Sergeant, belonging to the Party, a stout elderly man, stands by the boat, as if superintending the disembarkation.* QUENTIN *remains apart.*

ABRAHAM.

Farewell, the flats of Holland, and right welcome
The cliffs of Scotland! Fare thee well, black beer
And Schiedam gin! and welcome twopenny,
Oatcakes, and usquebaugh!

WILLIAMS (*who wants an arm*).

Farewell, the gallant field, and "Forward, pikemen!"
For the bridge-end, the suburb, and the lane;
And, "Bless your honour, noble gentleman,
Remember a poor soldier!"

ABRAHAM.

My tongue shall never need to smooth itself
To such poor sounds, while it can boldly say,
"Stand and deliver!"

WILLIAMS.

Hush, the sergeant hears you!

ABRAHAM.

And let him hear; he makes a bustle yonder,
And dreams of his authority, forgetting
We are disbanded men, o'er whom his halberd
Has not such influence as the beadle's baton.
We are no soldiers now, but every one
The lord of his own person.

WILLIAMS.

A wretched lordship—and our freedom such
As that of the old cart-horse, when the owner
Turns him upon the common. I for one
Will still continue to respect the sergeant,
And the comptroller, too—while the cash lasts.

ABRAHAM.

I scorn them both. I am too stout a Scotsman
To bear a Southron's rule an instant longer
Than discipline obliges; and for Quentin,
Quentin the quillman, Quentin the comptroller,
We have no regiment now; or, if we had,
Quentin 's no longer clerk to it.

WILLIAMS.

For shame! for shame! What, shall old comrades jar thus,
And on the verge of parting, and for ever!—
Nay, keep thy temper, Abraham, though a bad one,—
Good Master Quentin, let thy song last night
Give us once more our welcome to old Scotland.

ABRAHAM.

Ay, they sing light whose task is telling money,
When dollars clink for chorus.

QUENTIN.

I 've done with counting silver,[1] honest Abraham,
As thou, I fear, with pouching thy small share on 't.
But lend your voices, lads, and I will sing
As blithely yet as if a town were won;
As if upon a field of battle gain'd,
Our banners waved victorious.

[*He sings, and the rest bear chorus.*

[1] [MS.—"I 've done with counting dollars," &c.]

SONG.

Hither we come,
Once slaves to the drum,
But no longer we list to its rattle;
Adieu to the wars,
With their slashes and scars,
The march, and the storm, and the battle.

There are some of us maim'd,
And some that are lamed,
And some of old aches are complaining;
But we'll take up the tools,
Which we flung by like fools,
'Gainst Don Spaniard to go a-campaigning.

Dick Hathorn doth vow
To return to the plough,
Jack Steele to his anvil and hammer;
The weaver shall find room
At the wight-wapping loom,
And your clerk shall teach writing and grammar.

ABRAHAM.

And this is all that thou canst do, gay Quentin?
To swagger o'er a herd of parish brats,
Cut cheese or dibble onions with thy poniard,
And turn the sheath into a ferula?

QUENTIN.

I am the prodigal in holy writ;
I cannot work—to beg I am ashamed.
Besides, good mates, I care not who may know it,
I 'm e'en as fairly tired of this same fighting,

As the poor cur that 's worried in the shambles
By all the mastiff dogs of all the butchers;
Wherefore, farewell sword, poniard, petronel,
And welcome poverty and peaceful labour.

ABRAHAM.

Clerk Quentin, if of fighting thou art tired,
By my good word, thou 'rt quickly satisfied,
For thou 'st seen but little on 't.

WILLIAMS.

Thou dost belie him—I have seen him fight
Bravely enough for one in his condition.

ABRAHAM.

What he? that counter-casting, smock-faced boy?
What was he but the colonel's scribbling drudge,
With men of straw to stuff the regiment roll;
With cipherings unjust to cheat his comrades,
And cloak false musters for our noble captain?
He bid farewell to sword and petronel!
He should have said, farewell my pen and standish.
These, with the rosin used to hide erasures,
Were the best friends he left in camp behind him.

QUENTIN.

The sword you scoff at is not far, but scorns
The threats of an unmanner'd mutineer.

SERGEANT (*interposes*).

We 'll have no brawling—Shall it e'er be said,
That being comrades six long years together,
While gulping down the frowsy fogs of Holland,
We tilted at each other's throats so soon

As the first draught of native air refresh'd them?
No! by Saint Dunstan, I forbid the combat.
You all, methinks, do know this trusty halberd;
For I opine, that every back amongst you
Hath felt the weight of the tough ashen staff,
Endlong or overthwart. Who is it wishes
A remembrancer now? [*Raises his halberd.*

ABRAHAM.

Comrades, have you ears
To hear the old man bully? Eyes to see
His staff rear'd o'er your heads, as o'er the hounds
The huntsman cracks his whip?

WILLIAMS.

Well said—stout Abraham has the right on 't.—
I tell thee, sergeant, we do reverence thee,
And pardon the rash humours thou hast caught,
Like wiser men, from thy authority.
'Tis ended, howsoe'er, and we 'll not suffer
A word of sergeantry, or halberd-staff,
Nor the most petty threat of discipline.
If thou wilt lay aside thy pride of office,
And drop thy wont of swaggering and commanding,
Thou art our comrade still for good or evil.
Else take thy course apart, or with the clerk there—
A sergeant thou, and he being all thy regiment.

SERGEANT.

Is 't come to this, false knaves? And think you not,
That if you bear a name o'er other soldiers,
It was because you follow'd to the charge

One that had zeal and skill enough to lead you
Where fame was won by danger?

WILLIAMS.

We grant thy skill in leading, noble sergeant;
Witness some empty boots and sleeves amongst us,
Which else had still been tenanted with limbs
In the full quantity; and for the arguments
With which you used to back our resolution,
Our shoulders do record them. At a word,
Will you conform, or must we part our company?

SERGEANT.

Conform to you? Base dogs! I would not lead you
A bolt-flight farther to be made a general.
Mean mutineers! when you swill'd off the dregs
Of my poor sea-stores, it was, "Noble Sergeant—
Heaven bless old Hildebrand—we 'll follow him,
At least, until we safely see him lodged
Within the merry bounds of his own England!"

WILLIAMS.

Ay, truly, sir; but, mark, the ale was mighty,
And the Geneva potent. Such stout liquor
Makes violent protestations. Skink it round,
If you have any left, to the same tune,
And we may find a chorus for it still.

ABRAHAM.

We lose our time.—Tell us at once, old man,
If thou wilt march with us, or stay with Quentin?

SERGEANT.

Out, mutineers! Dishonour dog your heels!

ABRAHAM.

Wilful will have his way. Adieu, stout Hildebrand!

[*The Soldiers go off laughing, and taking leave, with mockery, of the* SERGEANT *and* QUENTIN, *who remain on the Stage.*

SERGEANT (*after a pause*).

Fly you not with the rest?—fail you to follow
Yon goodly fellowship and fair example?
Come, take your wild-goose flight. I know you Scots,
Like your own sea-fowl, seek your course together.

QUENTIN.

Faith, a poor heron I, who wing my flight
In loneliness, or with a single partner;
And right it is that I should seek for solitude,
Bringing but evil luck on them I herd with.

SERGEANT.

Thou 'rt thankless. Had we landed on the coast,
Where our course bore us, thou wert far from home:
But the fierce wind that drove us round the island,
Barring each port and inlet that we aim'd at,
Hath wafted thee to harbour; for I judge
This is thy native land we disembark on.

QUENTIN.

True, worthy friend. Each rock, each stream I look on,
Each bosky wood, and every frowning tower,
Awakens some young dream of infancy.
Yet such is my hard hap, I might more safely
Have look'd on Indian cliffs, or Afric's desert,
Than on my native shores. I 'm like a babe,
Doom'd to draw poison from my nurse's bosom.

SERGEANT.

Thou dream'st, young man. Unreal terrors haunt,
As I have noted, giddy brains like thine—
Flighty, poetic, and imaginative—
To whom a minstrel whim gives idle rapture,
And, when it fades, fantastic misery.

QUENTIN.

But mine is not fantastic. I can tell thee,
Since I have known thee still my faithful friend,
In part at least the dangerous plight I stand in.

SERGEANT.

And I will hear thee willingly, the rather
That I would let these vagabonds march on,
Nor join their troop again. Besides, good sooth,
I 'm wearied with the toil of yesterday,
And revel of last night.—And I may aid thee;
Yes, I may aid thee, comrade, and perchance
Thou mayst advantage me.

QUENTIN.

May it prove well for both!—But note, my friend,
I can but intimate my mystic story.
Some of it lies so secret—even the winds
That whistle round us must not know the whole—
An oath!—an oath!——

SERGEANT.

That must be kept, of course.
I ask but that which thou mayst freely tell.

QUENTIN.

I was an orphan boy, and first saw light

Not far from where we stand—my lineage low,
But honest in its poverty. A lord,
The master of the soil for many a mile,
Dreaded and powerful, took a kindly charge
For my advance in letters, and the qualities
Of the poor orphan lad drew some applause.
The knight was proud of me, and, in his halls,
I had such kind of welcome as the great
Give to the humble, whom they love to point to
As objects not unworthy their protection,
Whose progress is some honour to their patron—
A cure was spoken of, which I might serve,
My manners, doctrine, and acquirements fitting.

SERGEANT.

Hitherto thy luck
Was of the best, good friend. Few lords had cared
If thou couldst read thy grammar or thy psalter.
Thou hadst been valued couldst thou scour a harness,
And dress a steed distinctly.

QUENTIN.

My old master
Held different doctrine, at least it seem'd so—
But he was mix'd in many a deadly feud—
And here my tale grows mystic. I became,
Unwitting and unwilling, the depositary
Of a dread secret, and the knowledge on 't
Has wreck'd my peace for ever. It became
My patron's will, that I, as one who knew

More than I should, must leave the realm of Scotland,
And live or die within a distant land.[1]

SERGEANT.

Ah! thou hast done a fault in some wild raid,
As you wild Scotsmen call them.

QUENTIN.

Comrade, nay;
Mine was a peaceful part, and happ'd by chance.
I must not tell you more. Enough, my presence
Brought danger to my benefactor's house.
Tower after tower conceal'd me, willing still
To hide my ill-omen'd face with owls and ravens,[2]
And let my patron's safety be the purchase
Of my severe and desolate captivity.
So thought I, when dark Arran, with its walls
Of native rock, enclosed me. There I lurk'd,
A peaceful stranger amid armed clans,

[1] [MS.—*Quentin.* "My short tale
Grows mystic now. Among the deadly feuds
Which curse our country, something once it chanced
That I, unwilling and unwitting, witnessed;
And it became my benefactor's will,
That I should breathe the air of other climes."]

[2] [The MS. here adds:
"And then wild Arran with its darksome { clefts / walls
Of naked rock received me; till at last
I yielded to take service in the legion
Which lately has discharged us. Stout Montgomery,
Our colonel, hath been kind through five years' warfare."]

Without a friend to love or to defend me,
Where all beside were link'd by close alliances.
At length I made my option to take service
In that same legion of auxiliaries
In which we lately served the Belgian.
Our leader, stout Montgomery, hath been kind
Through full six years of warfare, and assign'd me
More peaceful tasks than the rough front of war,
For which my education little suited me.

SERGEANT.

Ay, therein was Montgomery kind indeed;
Nay, kinder than you think, my simple Quentin.
The letters which you brought to the Montgomery,
Pointed to thrust thee on some desperate service,
Which should most likely end thee.

QUENTIN.

Bore I such letters?—Surely, comrade, no.
Full deeply was the writer bound to aid me.
Perchance he only meant to prove my mettle;
And it was but a trick of my bad fortune
That gave his letters ill interpretation.

SERGEANT.

Ay, but thy better angel wrought for good,
Whatever ill thy evil fate designed thee.
Montgomery pitied thee, and changed thy service
In the rough field for labour in the tent,
More fit for thy green years and peaceful habits.

QUENTIN.

Even there his well-meant kindness injured me.

My comrades hated, undervalued me,
And whatsoe'er of service I could do them,
They guerdon'd with ingratitude and envy—
Such my strange doom, that if I serve a man
At deepest risk, he is my foe for ever!

SERGEANT.

Hast thou worse fate than others if it were so?
Worse even than me, thy friend, thine officer,
Whom yon ungrateful slaves have pitch'd ashore,
As wild waves heap the sea-weed on the beach,
And left him here, as if he had the pest
Or leprosy, and death were in his company?

QUENTIN.

They think at least you have the worst of plagues,
The worst of leprosies—they think you poor.

SERGEANT.

They think like lying villains then. I'm rich,
And they too might have felt it. I've a thought—
But stay—what plans your wisdom for yourself?

QUENTIN.

My thoughts are wellnigh desperate. But I purpose
Return to my stern patron—there to tell him
That wars, and winds, and waves, have cross'd his pleasure,
And cast me on the shore from whence he banish'd me.
Then let him do his will, and destine for me
A dungeon or a grave.

SERGEANT.

Now, by the rood, thou art a simple fool!

I can do better for thee. Mark me, Quentin.
I took my licence from the noble regiment,
Partly that I was worn with age and warfare,
Partly that an estate of yeomanry,
Of no great purchase, but enough to live on,
Has call'd me owner since a kinsman's death.
It lies in merry Yorkshire, where the wealth
Of fold and furrow, proper to Old England,
Stretches by streams which walk no sluggish pace,
But dance as light as yours. Now, good friend Quentin,
This copyhold can keep two quiet inmates,
And I am childless. Wilt thou be my son?

QUENTIN.

Nay, you can only jest, my worthy friend!
What claim have I to be a burden to you?

SERGEANT.

The claim of him that wants, and is in danger,
On him that has, and can afford protection:
Thou wouldst not fear a foeman in my cottage,
Where a stout mastiff slumber'd on the hearth,
And this good halberd hung above the chimney?
But come—I have it—thou shalt earn thy bread
Duly, and honourably, and usefully.
Our village schoolmaster hath left the parish,
Forsook the ancient schoolhouse with its yew-trees,
That lurk'd beside a church two centuries older—
So long devotion took the lead of knowledge;
And since his little flock are shepherdless,

'Tis thou shalt be promoted in his room;
And rather than thou wantest scholars, man,
Myself will enter pupil. Better late,
Our proverb says, than never to do well.
And look you, on the holydays I'd tell
To all the wondering boors and gaping children,
Strange tales of what the regiment did in Flanders,
And thou should'st say Amen, and be my warrant,
That I speak truth to them.

QUENTIN.

Would I might take thy offer! But, alas!
Thou art the hermit who compell'd a pilgrim,
In name of Heaven and heavenly charity,
To share his roof and meal, but found too late
That he had drawn a curse on him and his,
By sheltering a wretch foredoom'd of heaven!

SERGEANT.

Thou talk'st in riddles to me.

QUENTIN.

If I do,
'Tis that I am a riddle to myself.
Thou know'st I am by nature born a friend
To glee and merriment; can make wild verses;
The jest or laugh has never stopp'd with me,
When once 'twas set a rolling.

SERGEANT.

I have known thee
A blithe companion still, and wonder now
Thou shouldst become thus crest-fallen.

QUENTIN.

Does the lark sing her descant when the falcon
Scales the blue vault with bolder wing than hers,
And meditates a stoop? The mirth thou 'st noted
Was all deception, fraud—Hated enough
For other causes, I did veil my feelings
Beneath the mask of mirth—laugh'd, sung, and caroll'd,
To gain some interest in my comrades' bosoms,
Although mine own was bursting.

SERGEANT.

Thou 'rt a hypocrite
Of a new order.

QUENTIN.

But harmless as the innoxious snake,
Which bears the adder's form, lurks in his haunts,
Yet neither hath his fang-teeth nor his poison.
Look you, kind Hildebrand, I would seem merry,
Lest other men should, tiring of my sadness,
Expel me from them, as the hunted wether
Is driven from the flock.

SERGEANT.

Faith, thou hast borne it bravely out.
Had I been ask'd to name the merriest fellow
Of all our muster-roll—that man wert thou.

QUENTIN.

See'st thou, my friend, yon brook dance down the valley,
And sing blithe carols over broken rock

And tiny waterfall, kissing each shrub
And each gay flower it nurses in its passage—
Where, think'st thou, is its source, the bonny brook?—
It flows from forth a cavern, black and gloomy,
Sullen and sunless, like this heart of mine,
Which others see in a false glare of gaiety,
Which I have laid before you in its sadness.

SERGEANT.

If such wild fancies dog thee, wherefore leave
The trade where thou wert safe 'midst others' dangers,
And venture to thy native land, where fate
Lies on the watch for thee? Had old Montgomery
Been with the regiment, thou hadst had no congé.

QUENTIN.

No, 'tis most likely—But I had a hope,
A poor vain hope, that I might live obscurely
In some far corner of my native Scotland,
Which, of all others, splinter'd into districts,
Differing in manners, families, even language,
Seem'd a safe refuge for the humble wretch,
Whose highest hope was to remain unheard of.
But fate has baffled me—the winds and waves,
With force resistless, have impell'd me hither—
Have driven me to the clime most dang'rous to me;
And I obey the call, like the hurt deer,
Which seeks instinctively his native lair,
Though his heart tells him it is but to die there.

SERGEANT.

'Tis false, by Heaven, young man! This same despair,

Though shewing resignation in its banner,
Is but a kind of covert cowardice.
Wise men have said, that though our stars incline,
They cannot force us—Wisdom is the pilot,
And if he cannot cross, he may evade them.
You lend an ear to idle auguries,
The fruits of our last revels—still most sad
Under the gloom that follows boisterous mirth,
As earth looks blackest after brilliant sunshine.

QUENTIN.

No, by my honest word. I join'd the revel,
And aided it with laugh, and song, and shout,
But my heart revell'd not; and, when the mirth
Was at the loudest, on yon galliot's prow
I stood unmark'd, and gazed upon the land,
My native land—each cape and cliff I knew.
"Behold me now," I said, "your destined victim!"
So greets the sentenced criminal the headsman,
Who slow approaches with his lifted axe.
"Hither I come," I said, "ye kindred hills,
Whose darksome outline in a distant land
Haunted my slumbers; here I stand, thou ocean,
Whose hoarse voice, murmuring in my dreams, required me;
See me now here, ye winds, whose plaintive wail,
On yonder distant shores, appear'd to call me—
Summon'd, behold me." And the winds and waves,
And the deep echoes of the distant mountain,
Made answer—"Come, and die!"

SERGEANT.

Fantastic all! Poor boy, thou art distracted
With the vain terrors of some feudal tyrant,
Whose frown hath been from infancy thy bugbear.
Why seek his presence?

QUENTIN.

Wherefore does the moth
Fly to the scorching taper? Why the bird,
Dazzled by lights at midnight, seek the net?
Why does the prey, which feels the fascination
Of the snake's glaring eye, drop in his jaws?

SERGEANT.

Such wild examples but refute themselves.
Let bird, let moth, let the coil'd adder's prey,
Resist the fascination and be safe.
Thou goest not near this Baron—if thou goest,
I will go with thee. Known in many a field,
Which he in a whole life of petty feud
Has never dream'd of, I will teach the knight
To rule him in this matter—be thy warrant,
That far from him, and from his petty lordship,
You shall henceforth tread English land, and never
Thy presence shall alarm his conscience more.

QUENTIN.

'Twere desperate risk for both. I will far rather
Hastily guide thee through this dangerous province,
And seek thy school, thy yew-trees, and thy church-
yard;—
The last, perchance, will be the first I find.

SERGEANT.

I would rather face him,
Like a bold Englishman that knows his right,
And will stand by his friend. And yet 'tis folly—
Fancies like these are not to be resisted;
'Tis better to escape them. Many a presage,
Too rashly braved, becomes its own accomplishment.
Then let us go—but whither? My old head
As little knows where it shall lie to-night,
As yonder mutineers that left their officer,
As reckless of his quarters as these billows,
That leave the withered sea-weed on the beach,
And care not where they pile it.

QUENTIN.

Think not for that, good friend. We are in Scotland,
And if it is not varied from its wont,
Each cot, that sends a curl of smoke to heaven,
Will yield a stranger quarters for the night,
Simply because he needs them.

SERGEANT.

But are there none within an easy walk
Give lodgings here for hire? for I have left
Some of the Don's piastres (though I kept
The secret from yon gulls), and I had rather
Pay the fair reckoning I can well afford,
And my host takes with pleasure, than I'd cumber
Some poor man's roof with me and all my wants,
And tax his charity beyond discretion.

QUENTIN.

Some six miles hence there is a town and hostelry—
But you are wayworn, and it is most likely
Our comrades must have fill'd it.

SERGEANT.

Out upon them!—
Were there a friendly mastiff who would lend me
Half of his supper, half of his poor kennel,
I would help Honesty to pick his bones,
And share his straw, far rather than I'd sup
On jolly fare with these base varlets!

QUENTIN.

We 'll manage better; for our Scottish dogs,
Though stout and trusty, are but ill-instructed[1]
In hospitable rights.—Here is a maiden,
A little maid, will tell us of the country,
And sorely it is changed since I have left it,
If we should fail to find a harbourage.

Enter ISABEL MACLELLAN, *a girl of about six years old, bearing a milk-pail on her head; she stops on seeing the* SERGEANT *and* QUENTIN.

QUENTIN.

There 's something in her look that doth remind me—
But 'tis not wonder I find recollections
In all that here I look on.—Pretty maid——

[1] [MS.—"Gallant and grim, may be but ill-instructed."]

SERGEANT.

You're slow, and hesitate. I will be spokesman.—
Good even, my pretty maiden—canst thou tell us,
Is there a Christian house would render strangers,
For love or guerdon, a night's meal and lodging?

ISABEL.

Full surely, sir; we dwell in yon old house
Upon the cliff—they call it Chapeldonan.
[Points to the building.
Our house is large enough, and if our supper
Chance to be scant, you shall have half of mine,
For, as I think, sir, you have been a soldier.
Up yonder lies our house—I'll trip before,
And tell my mother she has guests a-coming;
The path is something steep, but you shall see
I'll be there first—I must chain up the dogs, too;
Nimrod and Bloodylass are cross to strangers,
But gentle when you know them.

[Exit, and is seen partially ascending to the Castle.

SERGEANT.

You have spoke
Your country folk aright, both for the dogs
And for the people.—We had luck to light
On one too young for cunning and for selfishness.—
He's in a reverie—a deep one sure,
Since the gibe on his country wakes him not.—
Bestir thee, Quentin!

QUENTIN.

'Twas a wondrous likeness.

SERGEANT.

Likeness! of whom? I'll warrant thee of one
Whom thou hast loved and lost.—Such fantasies
Live long in brains like thine, which fashion visions
Of woe and death when they are cross'd in love,
As most men are or have been.

QUENTIN.

Thy guess hath touch'd me, though it is but slightly,
'Mongst other woes: I knew, in former days,
A maid that view'd me with some glance of favour;
But my fate carried me to other shores,
And she has since been wedded. I did think on't
But as a bubble burst, a rainbow vanish'd;
It adds no deeper shade to the dark gloom
Which chills the springs of hope and life within me.
Our guide hath got a trick of voice and feature
Like to the maid I spoke of—that is all.

SERGEANT.

She bounds before us like a gamesome doe,
Or rather as the rock-bred eaglet soars
Up to her nest, as if she rose by will
Without an effort. Now a Netherlander,
One of our Frogland friends, viewing the scene,
Would take his oath that tower, and rock, and maiden,
Were forms too light and lofty to be real,
And only some delusion of the fancy,
Such as men dream at sunset. I myself

Have kept the level ground so many years,
I have wellnigh forgot the art to climb,
Unless assisted by thy younger arm.

[*They go off as if to ascend to the Tower, the* SERGEANT *leaning upon* QUENTIN.

SCENE II.

Scene changes to the Front of the Old Tower. ISABEL *comes forward with her Mother*—MARION *speaking as they advance.*

MARION.

I blame thee not, my child, for bidding wanderers
Come share our food and shelter, if thy father
Were here to welcome them; but, Isabel,
He waits upon his lord at Auchindrane,
And comes not home to-night.

ISABEL.

What then, my mother?
The travellers do not ask to see my father—
Food, shelter, rest, is all the poor men want,
And we can give them these without my father.

MARION.

Thou canst not understand, nor I explain,
Why a lone female asks not visitants [child,
What time her husband's absent. (*Apart.*)—My poor
And if thou 'rt wedded to a jealous husband,
Thou 'lt know too soon the cause.

ISABEL (*partly overhearing what her mother says*).
Ay, but I know already—Jealousy
Is, when my father chides, and you sit weeping.

MARION.
Out, little spy—thy father never chides;
Or if he does, 'tis when his wife deserves it.—
But to our strangers; they are old men, Isabel,
That seek this shelter?—are they not?

ISABEL.
One is old—
Old as this tower of ours, and worn like that,
Bearing deep marks of battles long since fought.

MARION.
Some remnant of the wars—he's welcome, surely,
Bringing no quality along with him
Which can alarm suspicion.—Well, the other?

ISABEL.
A young man, gentle-voiced and gentle-eyed,
Who looks and speaks like one the world has frown'd on;
But smiles when you smile, seeming that he feels
Joy in your joy, though he himself is sad.
Brown hair, and downcast looks.

MARION (*alarmed*).
'Tis but an idle thought—it cannot be! [*Listens.*
I hear his accents—It is all too true—
My terrors were prophetic!
I 'll compose myself,
And then accost him firmly. Thus it must be.
[*She retires hastily into the Tower.*

[*The voices of the* SERGEANT *and* QUENTIN *are heard ascending behind the Scenes.*

QUENTIN.

One effort more—we stand upon the level.
I've seen thee work thee up glacis and cavalier
Steeper than this ascent, when cannon, culverine,
Musket, and hackbut, shower'd their shot upon thee,
And form'd, with ceaseless blaze, a fiery garland
Round the defences of the post you storm'd.

[*They come on the Stage, and at the same time* MARION *re-enters from the Tower.*

SERGEANT.

Truly thou speak'st. I am the tardier,
That I, in climbing hither, miss the fire,
Which wont to tell me there was death in loitering.—
Here stands, methinks, our hostess.

[*He goes forward to address* MARION. QUENTIN, *struck on seeing her, keeps back.*

SERGEANT.

Kind dame, yon little lass hath brought you strangers,
Willing to be a trouble, not a charge to you.
We are disbanded soldiers, but have means
Ample enough to pay our journey homeward.

MARION.

We keep no house of general entertainment,
But know our duty, sir, to locks like yours,
Whiten'd and thinn'd by many a long campaign.
Ill chances that my husband should be absent—
(*Apart.*)—Courage alone can make me struggle through it—

For in your comrade, though he hath forgot me;
I spy a friend whom I have known in school-days,
And whom I think MacLellan well remembers.
[*She goes up to* QUENTIN.
You see a woman's memory
Is faithfuller than yours; for Quentin Blane
Hath not a greeting left for Marion Harkness.

QUENTIN (*with effort*).
I seek, indeed, my native land, good Marion,
But seek it like a stranger.—All is changed,
And thou thyself—

MARION.
You left a giddy maiden,
And find, on your return, a wife and mother.
Thine old acquaintance, Quentin, is my mate—
Stout Niel MacLellan, ranger to our lord,
The Knight of Auchindrane. He 's absent now,
But will rejoice to see his former comrade,
If, as I trust, you tarry his return.
(*Apart.*) Heaven grant he understand my words by contraries!
He must remember Niel and he were rivals;
He must remember Niel and he were foes;
He must remember Niel is warm of temper,
And think, instead of welcome, I would blithely
Bid him, God speed you. But he is as simple
And void of guile as ever.

QUENTIN.
Marion, I gladly rest within your cottage,

And gladly wait return of Niel MacLellan,
To clasp his hand, and wish him happiness.
Some rising feelings might perhaps prevent this—
But 'tis a peevish part to grudge our friends
Their share of fortune because we have miss'd it;
I can wish others joy and happiness,
Though I must ne'er partake them.

MARION.

But if it grieve you—

QUENTIN.

No! do not fear. The brightest gleams of hope
That shine on me are such as are reflected
From those which shine on others.

[*The* SERGEANT *and* QUENTIN *enter the Tower with the little Girl.*

MARION (*comes forward, and speaks in agitation*).
Even so! the simple youth has miss'd my meaning.
I shame to make it plainer, or to say,
In one brief word, Pass on—Heaven guide the bark,
For we are on the breakers! [*Exit into the Tower.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A withdrawing Apartment in the Castle of Auchindrane. Servants place a Table, with a Flask of Wine and Drinking-cups.

Enter MURE *of* AUCHINDRANE, *with* ALBERT GIFFORD, *his Relation and Visitor. They place themselves by the Table after some complimentary ceremony. At some distance is heard the noise of revelling.*

AUCHINDRANE.

We're better placed for confidential talk,
Than in the hall, fill'd with disbanded soldiers,
And fools and fiddlers gather'd on the highway—
The worthy guests whom Philip crowds my hall with,
And with them spends his evening.

GIFFORD.

But think you not, my friend, that your son Philip
Should be participant of these our councils,
Being so deeply mingled in the danger—
Your house's only heir—your only son?

AUCHINDRANE.

Kind cousin Gifford, if thou lack'st good counsel
At race, at cockpit, or at gambling-table,
Or any freak by which men cheat themselves
As well of life, as of the means to live,
Call for assistance upon Philip Mure;
But in all serious parley spare invoking him.

GIFFORD.

You speak too lightly of my cousin Philip;
All name him brave in arms.

AUCHINDRANE.

A second Bevis;
But I, my youth bred up in graver fashions,
Mourn o'er the mode of life in which he spends,
Or rather dissipates, his time and substance.
No vagabond escapes his search—The soldier
Spurn'd from the service, henceforth to be ruffian
Upon his own account, is Philip's comrade;
The fiddler, whose crack'd crowd has still three strings on 't;
The balladeer, whose voice has still two notes left;
Whate'er is roguish and whate'er is vile,
Are welcome to the board of Auchindrane,
And Philip will return them shout for shout,
And pledge for jovial pledge, and song for song,
Until the shamefaced sun peep at our windows,
And ask, "What have we here?"

GIFFORD.

You take such revel deeply—we are Scotsmen,

Far known for rustic hospitality,
That mind not birth or titles in our guests:
The harper has his seat beside our hearth,
The wanderer must find comfort at our board,
His name unask'd, his pedigree unknown;
So did our ancestors, and so must we.

AUCHINDRANE.

All this is freely granted, worthy kinsman;
And prithee do not think me churl enough
To count how many sit beneath my salt.
I've wealth enough to fill my father's hall
Each day at noon, and feed the guests who crowd it;
I am near mate with those whom men call Lord,
Though a rude western knight. But mark me, cousin,
Although I feed wayfaring vagabonds,
I make them not my comrades. Such as I,
Who have advanced the fortunes of my line,
And swell'd a baron's turret to a palace,
Have oft the curse awaiting on our thrift,
To see, while yet we live, the things which must be
At our decease—the downfall of our family,
The loss of land and lordship, name and knighthood,
The wreck of the fair fabric we have built,
By a degenerate heir. Philip has that
Of inborn meanness in him, that he loves not
The company of betters, nor of equals;
Never at ease, unless he bears the bell,
And crows the loudest in the company.
He 's mesh'd, too, in the snares of every female

Who deigns to cast a passing glance on him—
Licentious, disrespectful, rash, and profligate.

GIFFORD.

Come, my good coz, think we too have been young,
And I will swear that in your father's lifetime
You have yourself been trapp'd by toys like these.

AUCHINDRANE.

A fool I may have been—but not a madman;
I never play'd the rake among my followers,
Pursuing this man's sister, that man's wife;
And therefore never saw I man of mine,
When summon'd to obey my hest, grow restive,
Talk of his honour, of his peace destroy'd,
And, while obeying, mutter threats of vengeance.
But now the humour of an idle youth,
Disgusting trusted followers, sworn dependents,
Plays football with his honour and my safety.

GIFFORD.

I 'm sorry to find discord in your house,
For I had hoped, while bringing you cold news,
To find you arm'd in union 'gainst the danger.

AUCHINDRANE.

What can man speak that I would shrink to hear,
And where the danger I would deign to shun?
[*He rises.*
What should appal a man inured to perils,
Like the bold climber on the crags of Ailsa?
Winds whistle past him, billows rage below,
The sea-fowl sweep around, with shriek and clang,

One single slip, one unadvised pace,
One qualm of giddiness—and peace be with him!
But he whose grasp is sure, whose step is firm,
Whose brain is constant—he makes one proud rock
The means to scale another, till he stand
Triumphant on the peak.

GIFFORD.

And so I trust
Thou wilt surmount the danger now approaching,
Which scarcely can I frame my tongue to tell you,
Though I rode here on purpose.

AUCHINDRANE.

Cousin, I think thy heart was never coward,
And strange it seems thy tongue should take such semblance.
I 've heard of many a loud-mouth'd, noisy braggart,
Whose hand gave feeble sanction to his tongue;
But thou art one whose heart can think bold things,
Whose hand can act them—but who shrinks to speak them!

GIFFORD.

And if I speak them not, 'tis that I shame
To tell thee of the calumnies that load thee.
Things loudly spoken at the city Cross—
Things closely whisper'd in our Sovereign's ear—
Things which the plumed lord and flat-capp'd citizen
Do circulate amid their different ranks— [them,
Things false, no doubt; but, falsehoods while I deem
Still honouring thee, I shun the odious topic.

AUCHINDRANE.

Shun it not, cousin; 'tis a friend's best office
To bring the news we hear unwillingly.
The sentinel, who tells the foe's approach,
And wakes the sleeping camp, does but his duty:
Be thou as bold in telling me of danger,
As I shall be in facing danger told of.

GIFFORD.

I need not bid thee recollect the death-feud
That raged so long betwixt thy house and Cassilis;
I need not bid thee recollect the league,
When royal James himself stood mediator
Between thee and Earl Gilbert.

AUCHINDRANE.

Call you these news?—You might as well have told me
That old King Coil is dead, and graved at Kylesfeld.
I'll help thee out—King James commanded us
Henceforth to live in peace, made us clasp hands too.
O, sir, when such an union hath been made,
In heart and hand conjoining mortal foes,
Under a monarch's royal mediation,
The league is not forgotten. And with this
What is there to be told? The king commanded—
"Be friends." No doubt we were so—Who dares
doubt it?

GIFFORD.

You speak but half the tale.

AUCHINDRANE.

By good Saint Trimon, but I'll tell the whole!

There is no terror in the tale for me—[1]
Go speak of ghosts to children!—This Earl Gilbert
(God sain him) loved Heaven's peace as well as I did,
And we were wondrous friends whene'er we met
At church or market, or in burrows town.
Midst this, our good Lord Gilbert, Earl of Cassilis,
Takes purpose he would journey forth to Edinburgh.
The King was doling gifts of abbey-lands,
Good things that thrifty house was wont to fish for.
Our mighty Earl forsakes his sea-wash'd castle,
Passes our borders some four miles from hence;
And, holding it unwholesome to be fasters
Long after sunrise, lo! the Earl and train
Dismount, to rest their nags and eat their breakfast.
The morning rose, the small birds caroll'd sweetly—
The corks were drawn, the pasty brooks incision—
His lordship jests, his train are choked with laughter;
When—wondrous change of cheer; and most unlook'd for,
Strange epilogue to bottle and to baked meat!—
Flash'd from the greenwood half a score of carabines;
And the good Earl of Cassilis, in his breakfast,
Had nooning, dinner, supper, all at once,
Even in the morning that he closed his journey;
And the grim sexton, for his chamberlain,
Made him the bed which rests the head for ever.

[1] ["There is no terror, Cassius, in your threats."
Shakspeare.]

GIFFORD.

Told with much spirit, cousin—some there are
Would add, and in a tone resembling triumph.
And would that with these long-establish'd facts
My tale began and ended! I must tell you,
That evil-deeming censures of the events,
Both at the time and now, throw blame on thee—
Time, place, and circumstance, they say, proclaim thee,
Alike, the author of that morning's ambush.

AUCHINDRANE.

Ay, 'tis an old belief in Carrick here,
Where natives do not always die in bed,
That if a Kennedy shall not attain
Methuselah's last span, a Mure has slain him.
Such is the general creed of all their clan.
Thank Heaven, that they 're bound to prove the charge
They are so prompt in making. They have clamour'd
Enough of this before, to shew their malice.
But what said these coward pickthanks when I came
Before the King, before the Justicers,
Rebutting all their calumnies, and daring them
To shew that I knew aught of Cassilis' journey—
Which way he meant to travel—where to halt—
Without which knowledge I possess'd no means
To dress an ambush for him? Did I not
Defy the assembled clan of Kennedys
To shew, by proof direct or inferential,
Wherefore they slander'd me with this foul charge?

My gauntlet rung before them in the court,
And I did dare the best of them to lift it,
And prove such charge a true one—Did I not?

GIFFORD.

I saw your gauntlet lie before the Kennedys,
Who look'd on it as men do on an adder,
Longing to crush, and yet afraid to grasp it.
Not an eye sparkled—not a foot advanced—
No arm was stretch'd to lift the fatal symbol.

AUCHINDRANE.

Then, wherefore do the hildings murmur now?
Wish they to see again, how one bold Mure
Can baffle and defy their assembled valour?

GIFFORD.

No; but they speak of evidence suppress'd.

AUCHINDRANE.

Suppress'd?—what evidence?—by whom suppress'd?
What Will-o'-Wisp—what idiot of a witness,
Is he to whom they trace an empty voice,
But cannot shew his person?

GIFFORD.

They pretend,
With the King's leave, to bring it to a trial;
Averring that a lad, named Quentin Blane,
Brought thee a letter from the murder'd Earl,
With friendly greetings, telling of his journey,
The hour which he set forth, the place he halted at
Affording thee the means to form the ambush,
Of which your hatred made the application.

AUCHINDRANE.

A prudent Earl, indeed, if such his practice,
When dealing with a recent enemy!
And what should he propose by such strange confidence
In one who sought it not?

GIFFORD.

His purposes were kindly, say the Kennedys—
Desiring you would meet him where he halted,
Offering to undertake whate'er commissions
You listed trust him with, for court or city:
And, thus apprized of Cassilis' purposed journey,
And of his halting-place, you placed the ambush,
Prepared the homicides——

AUCHINDRANE.

They 're free to say their pleasure. They are men
Of the new court—and I am but a fragment
Of stout old Morton's faction. It is reason
That such as I be rooted from the earth
That they may have full room to spread their branches.
No doubt, 'tis easy to find strolling vagrants
To prove whate'er they prompt. This Quentin Blane—
Did you not call him so?—why comes he now?
And wherefore not before? This must be answered
—(*abruptly*)—
Where is he now?

GIFFORD.

Abroad—they say—kidnapp'd,
By you kidnapp'd, that he might die in Flanders.

But orders have been sent for his discharge,
And his transmission hither.

AUCHINDRANE (*assuming an air of composure*).
When they produce such witness, cousin Gifford,
We'll be prepared to meet it. In the meanwhile,
The King doth ill to throw his royal sceptre
In the accuser's scale, ere he can know
How justice shall incline it.

GIFFORD.
Our sage prince
Resents, it may be, less the death of Cassilis,
Than he is angry that the feud should burn,
After his royal voice had said, "Be quench'd:"
Thus urging prosecution less for slaughter,
Than that, being done against the King's command,
Treason is mix'd with homicide.

AUCHINDRANE.
Ha! ha! most true, my cousin.
Why, well consider'd, 'tis a crime so great
To slay one's enemy, the King forbidding it,
Like parricide, it should be held impossible.
'Tis just as if a wretch retain'd the evil,
When the King's touch had bid the sores be heal'd;
And such a crime merits the stake at least.
What! can there be within a Scottish bosom
A feud so deadly, that it kept its ground
When the King said, Be friends! It is not credible.
Were I King James, I never would believe it:
I'd rather think the story all a dream,

And that there was no friendship, feud, nor journey,
No halt, no ambush, and no Earl of Cassilis,
Than dream anointed Majesty has wrong!—

GIFFORD.

Speak within door, coz.

AUCHINDRANE.

O, true—(*aside*)—I shall betray myself
Even to this half-bred fool.—I must have room,
Room for an instant, or I suffocate.—
Cousin, I prithee call our Philip hither—
Forgive me; 'twere more meet I summon'd him
Myself; but then the sight of yonder revel
Would chafe my blood, and I have need of coolness.

GIFFORD.

I understand thee—I will bring him straight. [*Exit.*

AUCHINDRANE.

And if thou dost, he 's lost his ancient trick
To fathom, as he wont, his five-pint flagons.—
This space is mine—O for the power to fill it,
Instead of senseless rage and empty curses,
With the dark spell which witches learn from fiends,
That smites the object of their hate afar,
Nor leaves a token of its mystic action,
Stealing the soul from out the unscathed body,
As lightning melts the blade, nor harms the scabbard!
—'Tis vain to wish for it—Each curse of mine
Falls to the ground as harmless as the arrows
Which children shoot at stars! The time for thought,
If thought could aught avail me, melts away,

Like to a snow-ball in a school-boy's hand,
That melts the faster the more close he grasps it!—
If I had time, this Scottish Solomon,
Whom some call son of David the Musician,[1]
Might find it perilous work to march to Carrick.
There 's many a feud still slumbering in its ashes,
Whose embers are yet red. Nobles we have,
Stout as Old Graysteel, and as hot as Bothwell;
Here too are castles look from crags as high
On seas as wide as Logan's. So the King—
Pshaw! He is here again—

Enter GIFFORD.

I heard you name
The King, my kinsman; know, he comes not hither.

AUCHINDRANE (*affecting indifference*).

Nay, then we need not broach our barrels, cousin,
Nor purchase us new jerkins.—Comes not Philip?

GIFFORD.

Yes, sir. He tarries but to drink a service
To his good friends at parting.

AUCHINDRANE.

Friends for the beadle or the sheriff-officer.
Well, let it pass. Who comes, and how attended,
Since James designs not westward?

GIFFORD.

O you shall have, instead, his fiery functionary,

[The calumnious tale which ascribed the birth of James VI. to an intrigue of Queen Mary with Rizzio.]

George Home that was, but now Dunbar's great Earl;
He leads a royal host, and comes to shew you
How he distributes justice on the Border,
Where judge and hangman oft reverse their office,
And the noose does its work before the sentence.
But I have said my tidings best and worst.
None but yourself can know what course the time
And peril may demand. To lift your banner,
If I might be a judge, were desperate game:
Ireland and Galloway offer you convenience
For flight, if flight be thought the better remedy;
To face the court requires the consciousness
And confidence of innocence. You alone
Can judge if you possess these attributes.

[*A noise behind the scenes.*

AUCHINDRANE.

Philip, I think, has broken up his revels;
His ragged regiment are dispersing them,
Well liquor'd, doubtless. They're disbanded soldiers,
Or some such vagabonds.—Here comes the gallant.

[*Enter* PHILIP. *He has a buff-coat and head-piece, wears a sword and dagger, with pistols at his girdle. He appears to be affected by liquor, but to be by no means intoxicated.*

AUCHINDRANE.

You scarce have been made known to one another,
Although you sate together at the board.—
Son Philip, know and prize our cousin Gifford.

PHILIP (*tastes the wine on the table*).
If you had prized him, sir, you had been loath
To have welcomed him in bastard Alicant:
I 'll make amends, by pledging his good journey
In glorious Burgundy.—The stirrup-cup, ho!
And bring my cousin's horses to the court.

AUCHINDRANE (*draws him aside*).
The stirrup-cup! He doth not ride to-night—
Shame on such churlish conduct to a kinsman!

PHILIP (*aside to his father*).
I 've news of pressing import.
Send the fool off.—Stay, I will start him for you.
(*To* GIFFORD.) Yes, my kind cousin, Burgundy is better,
On a night-ride, to those who thread our moors,
And we may deal it freely to our friends,
For we came freely by it. Yonder ocean
Rolls many a purple cask upon our shore,
Rough with embossed shells and shagged sea-weed,
When the good skipper and his careful crew
Have had their latest earthly draught of brine,
And gone to quench, or to endure their thirst,
Where nectar 's plenty, or even water 's scarce,
And filter'd to the parched crew by dropsfull.

AUCHINDRANE.
Thou 'rt mad, son Philip!—Gifford 's no intruder,
That we should rid him hence by such wild rants:
My kinsman hither rode at his own danger,
To tell us that Dunbar is hasting to us,

With a strong force, and with the King's commission,
To enforce against our house a hateful charge,
With every measure of extremity.

PHILIP.

And is this all that our good cousin tells us?
I can say more, thanks to the ragged regiment,
With whose good company you have upbraided me,
On whose authority, I tell thee, cousin,
Dunbar is here already.

GIFFORD.

Already?

PHILIP.

Yes, gentle coz. And you, my sire, be hasty
In what you think to do.

AUCHINDRANE.

I think thou darest not jest on such a subject.
Where hadst thou these fell tidings?

PHILIP.

Where you, too, might have heard them, noble father,
Save that your ears, nail'd to our kinsman's lips,
Would list no coarser accents. O, my soldiers,
My merry crew of vagabonds, forever!
Scum of the Netherlands, and wash'd ashore
Upon this coast like unregarded sea-weed,
They had not been two hours on Scottish land,
When, lo! they met a military friend,
An ancient fourier, known to them of old,
Who, warm'd by certain stoups of searching wine,
Inform'd his old companions that Dunbar

Left Glasgow yesterday, comes here to-morrow;
Himself, he said, was sent a spy before,
To view what preparations we were making.

AUCHINDRANE (*to* GIFFORD).

If this be sooth, good kinsman, thou must claim
To take a part with us for life and death,
Or speed from hence, and leave us to our fortune.

GIFFORD.

In such dilemma,
Believe me, friend, I'd choose upon the instant—
But I lack harness, and a steed to charge on,
For mine is overtired, and, save my page,
There's not a man to back me. But I'll hie
To Kyle, and raise my vassals to your aid.

PHILIP.

'Twill be when the rats,
That on these tidings fly this house of ours,
Come back to pay their rents.—(*Apart.*)

AUCHINDRANE.

Courage, cousin—
Thou goest not hence ill mounted for thy need:
Full forty coursers feed in my wide stalls,
The best of them is yours to speed your journey.

PHILIP.

Stand not on ceremony, good our cousin,
When safety signs, to shorten courtesy.

GIFFORD (*to* AUCHINDRANE).

Farewell, then, cousin, for my tarrying here
Were ruin to myself, small aid to you;

Yet loving well your name and family,
I'd fain——

PHILIP.

Be gone?—that is our object, too—
Kinsman, adieu.

[*Exit* GIFFORD. PHILIP *calls after him*

You yeomen of the stable,
Give Master Gifford there my fleetest steed,
Yon cut-tail'd roan that trembles at a spear.—

[*Trampling of the horse heard going off.*

Hark! he departs. How swift the dastard rides,
To shun the neighbourhood of jeopardy!

[*He lays aside the appearance of levity which he has hitherto worn, and says very seriously,*

And now, my father—

AUCHINDRANE.

And now, my son—thou 'st ta'en a perilous game
Into thine hands, rejecting elder counsel—
How dost thou mean to play it?

PHILIP.

Sir, good gamesters play not
Till they review the cards which fate has dealt them,
Computing thus the chances of the game;
And wofully they seem to weigh against us.

AUCHINDRANE.

Exile 's a passing ill, and may be borne;
And when Dunbar and all his myrmidons
Are eastward turn'd, we 'll seize our own again.

PHILIP.

Would that were all the risk we had to stand to!
But more and worse—a doom of treason, forfeiture,
Death to ourselves, dishonour to our house,
Is what the stern Justiciary menaces;
And, fatally for us, he hath the means
To make his threatenings good.

AUCHINDRANE.

It cannot be. I tell thee, there 's no force
In Scottish law to raze a house like mine,
Coeval with the time the Lords of Galloway
Submitted them unto the Scottish sceptre,
Renouncing rights of Tanistry and Brehon.
Some dreams they have of evidence; some suspicion.
But old Montgomery knows my purpose well,
And long before their mandate reach the camp
To crave the presence of this mighty witness,
He will be fitted with an answer to it.

PHILIP.

Father, what we call great, is often ruin'd
By means so ludicrously disproportion'd,
They make me think upon the gunner's linstock,
Which, yielding forth a light about the size
And semblance of the glowworm, yet applied
To powder, blew a palace into atoms,
Sent a young King—a young Queen's mate at least—
Into the air, as high as e'er flew night-hawk,
And made such wild work in the realm of Scotland,

As they can tell who heard—and you were one
Who saw, perhaps, the night-flight which began it.

AUCHINDRANE.

If thou hast nought to speak but drunken folly,
I cannot listen longer.

PHILIP.

I will speak brief and sudden.—There is one
Whose tongue to us has the same perilous force
Which Bothwell's powder had to Kirk of Field;
One whose least tones, and those but peasant accents,
Could rend the roof from off our father's castle,
Level its tallest turret with its base;
And he that doth possess this wondrous power
Sleeps this same night not five miles distant from us.

AUCHINDRANE (*who had looked on* PHILIP *with much appearance of astonishment and doubt, exclaims*),

Then thou art mad indeed!—Ha! ha! I 'm glad on 't.
I 'd purchase an escape from what I dread,
Even by the frenzy of my only son!

PHILIP.

I thank you, but agree not to the bargain.
You rest on what yon civet cat has said:
Yon silken doublet, stuff'd with rotten straw,
Told you but half the truth, and knew no more.
But my good vagrants had a perfect tale:
They told me, little judging the importance,
That Quentin Blane had been discharged with them.
They told me, that a quarrel happ'd at landing,

And that the youngster and an ancient sergeant
Had left their company, and taken refuge
In Chapeldonan, where our ranger dwells;[1]
They saw him scale the cliff on which it stands.
Ere they were out of sight; the old man with him.
And therefore laugh no more at me as mad;
But laugh, if thou hast list for merriment,
To think he stands on the same land with us,
Whose absence thou wouldst deem were cheaply purchased
With thy soul's ransom and thy body's danger.

AUCHINDRANE.

'Tis then a fatal truth! Thou art no yelper,
To open rashly on so wild a scent;
Thou 'rt the young blood-hound, which careers and springs,
Frolics and fawns, as if the friend of man,
But seizes on his victim like a tiger.

PHILIP.

No matter what I am—I 'm as you bred me;
So let that pass till there be time to mend me,
And let us speak like men, and to the purpose.
This object of our fear and of our dread,
Since such our pride must own him, sleeps to-night
Within our power:—to-morrow in Dunbar's,
And we are then his victims.[2]

[1] [MS.—"In the old tower where Niel MacLellan dwells.
And therefore laugh no more," &c.]
[2] [MS.—"And we are then in his power."]

AUCHINDRANE.

He is in *ours* to-night.[1]

PHILIP.

He is. I'll answer that MacLellan's trusty.

AUCHINDRANE.

Yet he replied to you to-day full rudely.

PHILIP.

Yes! The poor knave has got a handsome wife,
And is gone mad with jealousy.

AUCHINDRANE.

Fool!—When we need the utmost faith, allegiance,
Obedience, and attachment in our vassals,
Thy wild intrigues pour gall into their hearts,
And turn their love to hatred!

PHILIP.

Most reverend sire, you talk of ancient morals,
Preach'd on by Knox, and practised by Glencairn;[2]

[1] [MS.—"He's in *our* power to-night."]

[2] [Alexander, fifth Earl of Glencairn, for distinction called "The Good Earl," was among the first of the peers of Scotland who concurred in the Reformation, in aid of which he acted a conspicuous part, in the employment both of his sword and pen. In a remonstrance with the Queen Regent, he told her, that "if she violated the engagements which she had come under to her subjects, they would consider themselves as absolved from their allegiance to her." He was author of a satirical poem against the Roman Catholics, entitled "The Hermit of Allareit" (Loretto). —See *Sibbald's Chronicle of Scottish Poetry.*—He assisted the Reformers with his sword, when they took arms at Perth, in 1559; had a principal command in the army embodied against Queen Mary, in June 1567; and demolished the altar, broke the images, tore down the pictures, &c., in the Chapel-royal of Holyroodhouse, after the Queen was conducted to Lochleven. He died in 1574.]

Respectable, indeed, but somewhat musty
In these our modern nostrils. In our days,
If a young baron chance to leave his vassal
The sole possessor of a handsome wife,
'Tis sign he loves his follower; and if not,
He loves his follower's wife, which often proves
The surer bond of patronage. Take either case:
Favour flows in of course, and vassals rise.

AUCHINDRANE.

Philip, this is infamous,
And, what is worse, impolitic. Take example:
Break not God's laws or man's for each temptation
That youth and blood suggest. I am a man—
A weak and erring man;—full well thou know'st
That I may hardly term myself a pattern
Even to my son;—yet thus far will I say,
I never swerved from my integrity,
Save at the voice of strong necessity,
Or such o'erpowering view of high advantage
As wise men liken to necessity,
In strength and force compulsive. No one saw me
Exchange my reputation for my pleasure,
Or do the Devil's work without his wages.
I practised prudence, and paid tax to virtue,
By following her behests, save where strong reason
Compell'd a deviation. Then, if preachers
At times look'd sour, or elders shook their heads,
They could not term my walk irregular;
For I stood up still for the worthy cause,

A pillar, though a flaw'd one, of the altar,
Kept a strict walk, and led three hundred horse.

PHILIP.

Ah, these three hundred horse in such rough times
Were better commendation to a party
Than all your efforts at hypocrisy,
Betray'd so oft by avarice and ambition,
And dragg'd to open shame. But, righteous father,
When sire and son unite in mutual crime,
And join their efforts to the same enormity,
It is no time to measure other's faults,
Or fix the amount of each. Most moral father,
Think if it be a moment now to weigh
The vices of the Heir of Auchindrane,
Or take precaution that the ancient house
Shall have another heir than the sly courtier
That 's gaping for the forfeiture.

AUCHINDRANE.

We 'll disappoint him, Philip—
We 'll disappoint him yet. It is a folly,
A wilful cheat, to cast our eyes behind,
When time, and the fast flitting opportunity,
Call loudly, nay, compel us to look forward:
Why are we not already at MacLellan's,
Since there the victim sleeps?

PHILIP.

Nay, soft, I pray thee
I had not made your piety my confessor,
Nor enter'd in debate on these sage councils,

Which you're more like to give than I to profit by,
Could I have used the time more usefully;
But first an interval must pass between
The fate of Quentin and the little artifice
That shall detach him from his comrade,
The stout old soldier that I told you of.

AUCHINDRANE.

How work a point so difficult—so dangerous?

PHILIP.

'Tis cared for. Mark, my father, the convenience
Arising from mean company. My agents
Are at my hand, like a good workman's tools,
And if I mean a mischief, ten to one
That they anticipate the deed and guilt.
Well knowing this, when first the vagrants' tattle
Gave me the hint that Quentin was so near us,
Instant I sent MacLellan, with strong charges
To stop him for the night, and bring me word,
Like an accomplish'd spy, how all things stood,
Lulling the enemy into security.

AUCHINDRANE.

There was a prudent general!

PHILIP.

MacLellan went and came within the hour.
The jealous bee, which buzzes in his nightcap,
Had humm'd to him, this fellow, Quentin Blane,
Had been in schoolboy days an humble lover
Of his own pretty wife—

AUCHINDRANE.

Most fortunate!

The knave will be more prompt to serve our purpose.

PHILIP.

No doubt on't. 'Mid the tidings he brought back
Was one of some importance. The old man
Is flush of dollars; this I caused him tell
Among his comrades, who became as eager
To have him in their company, as e'er [space,
They had been wild to part with him. And in brief
A letter's framed by an old hand amongst them,
Familiar with such feats. It bore the name
And character of old Montgomery,
Whom he might well suppose at no great distance,
Commanding his old Sergeant Hildebrand,
By all the ties of late authority,
Conjuring him by ancient soldiership,
To hasten to his mansion instantly,
On business of high import, with a charge
To come alone——

AUCHINDRANE.

Well, he sets out, I doubt it not—what follows?

PHILIP.

I am not curious into others' practices—
So far I'm an economist in guilt,
As you my sire advise. But on the road
To old Montgomery's he meets his comrades,
They nourish grudge against him and his dollars,

And things may hap, which counsel learn'd in law
Call Robbery and Murder. Should he live,
He has seen nought that we would hide from him.

AUCHINDRANE.

Who carries the forged letter to the veteran?

PHILIP.

Why, Niel MacLellan, who return'd again
To his own tower, as if to pass the night there.
They pass'd on him, or tried to pass, a story,
As if they wish'd the sergeant's company,
Without the young comptroller's—that is Quentin's,
And he became an agent of their plot,
That he might better carry on our own.

AUCHINDRANE.

There's life in it—yes, there is life in 't;
And we will have a mounted party ready
To scour the moors in quest of the banditti
That kill'd the poor old man—they shall die instantly.
Dunbar shall see us use sharp justice here,
As well as he in Teviotdale. You are sure
You gave no hint nor impulse to their purpose?

PHILIP.

It needed not. The whole pack oped at once
Upon the scent of dollars.—But time comes
When I must seek the tower, and act with Niel
What farther's to be done.

AUCHINDRANE.

Alone with him thou goest not. He bears grudge—
Thou art my only son, and on a night

When such wild passions are so free abroad,
When such wild deeds are doing, 'tis but natural
I guarantee thy safety.—I 'll ride with thee.

PHILIP.

E'en as you will, my lord. But pardon me—
If you will come, let us not have a word
Of conscience, and of pity, and forgiveness;
Fine words to-morrow, out of place to-night.
Take counsel then, leave all this work to me;
Call up your household, make fit preparation,
In love and peace, to welcome this Earl Justiciar,
As one that 's free of guilt. Go, deck the castle
As for an honour'd guest. Hallow the chapel
(If they have power to hallow it) with thy prayers.
Let me ride forth alone, and ere the sun
Comes o'er the eastern hill, thou shalt accost him:
"Now do thy worst, thou oft-returning spy,
Here 's nought thou canst discover."

AUCHINDRANE.

Yet goest thou not alone with that MacLellan!
He deems thou bearest will to injure him,
And seek'st occasion suiting to such will.
Philip, thou art irreverent, fierce, ill-nurtured,
Stain'd with low vices, which disgust a father;
Yet ridest thou not alone with yonder man—
Come weal come woe, myself will go with thee.

[*Exit, and calls to horse behind the Scene.*

PHILIP (*alone*).

Now would I give my fleetest horse to know

What sudden thought roused this paternal care,
And if 'tis on his own account or mine:
'Tis true, he hath the deepest share in all
That's likely now to hap, or which has happen'd.
Yet strong through Nature's universal reign,
The link which binds the parent to the offspring:
The she-wolf knows it, and the tigress owns it.
So that dark man, who, shunning what is vicious,
Ne'er turn'd aside from an atrocity,
Hath still some care left for his hapless offspring.
Therefore 'tis meet, though wayward, light, and stubborn,
That I should do for him all that a son
Can do for sire—and his dark wisdom join'd
To influence my bold courses, 'twill be hard
To break our mutual purpose.—Horses there!

[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

It is moonlight. The scene is the Beach beneath the Tower which was exhibited in the first scene—the Vessel is gone from her anchorage. AUCHINDRANE *and* PHILIP, *as if dismounted from their horses, come forward cautiously.*

PHILIP.

The nags are safely stow'd. Their noise might scare him;
Let them be safe, and ready when we need them,
The business is but short. We'll call MacLellan,
To wake him, and in quiet bring him forth,
If he be so disposed, for here are waters
Enough to drown, and sand enough to cover him.
But if he hesitate, or fear to meet us,
By heaven I'll deal on him in Chapeldonan
With my own hand!—

AUCHINDRANE.

Too furious boy!—alarm or noise undoes us,
Our practice must be silent as 'tis sudden.

Bethink thee that conviction of this slaughter
Confirms the very worst of accusations
Our foes can bring against us. Wherefore should we,
Who by our birth and fortune mate with nobles,
And are allied with them, take this lad's life,
His peasant life, unless to quash his evidence,
Taking such pains to rid him from the world,
Who would, if spared, have fix'd a crime upon us?

PHILIP.

Well, I do own me one of those wise folks,
Who think that when a deed of fate is plann'd,
The execution cannot be too rapid.
But do we still keep purpose? Is 't determin'd
He sails for Ireland—and without a wherry?
Salt water is his passport—is it not so?

AUCHINDRANE.

I would it could be otherwise.
Might he not go there while in life and limb,
And breathe his span out in another air?
Many seek Ulster never to return—
Why might this wretched youth not harbour there?

PHILIP.

With all my heart. It is small honour to me
To be the agent in a work like this.—
Yet this poor caitiff, having thrust himself
Into the secrets of a noble house,
And twined himself so closely with our safety,
That we must perish, or that he must die,

I 'll hesitate as little on the action,
As I would do to slay the animal
Whose flesh supplies my dinner. 'Tis as harmless,
That deer or steer, as is this Quentin Blane,
And not more necessary is its death
To our accommodation—so we slay it
Without a moment's pause or hesitation.

AUCHINDRANE.

'Tis not, my son, the feeling call'd remorse,
That now lies tugging at this heart of mine,
Engendering thoughts that stop the lifted hand.
Have I not heard John Knox pour forth his thunders
Against the oppressor and the man of blood,
In accents of a minister of vengeance?
Were not his fiery eyeballs turn'd on me,
As if he said expressly, "Thou 'rt the man?"
Yet did my solid purpose, as I listen'd,
Remain unshaken as that massive rock.

PHILIP.

Well, then, I 'll understand 'tis not remorse—
As 'tis a foible little known to thee—
That interrupts thy purpose. What, then, is it?
Is 't scorn, or is 't compassion? One thing 's certain,
Either the feeling must have free indulgence,
Or fully be subjected to your reason—
There is no room for these same treacherous courses,
Which men call moderate measures.
We must confide in Quentin, or must slay him.

AUCHINDRANE.

In Ireland he might live afar from us.

PHILIP.

Among Queen Mary's faithful partisans,
Your ancient enemies, the haughty Hamiltons,
The stern MacDonnells, and resentful Græmes—
With these around him, and with Cassilis' death
Exasperating them against you, think, my father,
What chance of Quentin's silence.

AUCHINDRANE.

Too true—too true. He is a silly youth, too,
Who had not wit to shift for his own living—
A bashful lover, whom his rivals laugh'd at—
Of pliant temper, which companions play'd on—
A moonlight waker, and a noontide dreamer—
A torturer of phrases into sonnets,
Whom all might lead that chose to praise his rhymes.

PHILIP.

I marvel that your memory has room
To hold so much on such a worthless subject.

AUCHINDRANE.

Base in himself, and yet so strangely link'd
With me and with my fortunes, that I 've studied
To read him through and through, as I would read
Some paltry rhyme of vulgar prophecy,
Said to contain the fortunes of my house;
And, let me speak him truly—He is grateful,
Kind, tractable, obedient—a child
Might lead him by a thread—He shall not die!

PHILIP.

Indeed!—then have we had our midnight ride
To wondrous little purpose.

AUCHINDRANE.

By the blue heaven,
Thou shalt not murder him, cold selfish sensualist!
Yon pure vault speaks it—yonder summer moon,
With its ten million sparklers, cries, Forbear!
The deep earth sighs it forth—Thou shalt not murder!—
Thou shalt not mar the image of thy Maker!
Thou shalt not from thy brother take the life,
The precious gift which God alone can give!—

PHILIP.

Here is a worthy guerdon now, for stuffing
His memory with old saws and holy sayings!
They come upon him in the very crisis,
And when his resolution should be firmest,
They shake it like a palsy—Let it be,
He'll end at last by yielding to temptation,
Consenting to the thing which must be done,
With more remorse the more he hesitates.—

[*To his Father, who has stood fixed after his last speech.*

Well, sir, 'tis fitting you resolve at last,
How the young clerk shall be disposed upon;
Unless you would ride home to Auchindrane,
And bid them rear the Maiden in the court-yard,

That when Dunbar comes, he have nought to do.
But bid us kiss the cushion and the headsman.

AUCHINDRANE.

It is too true—There is no safety for us,
Consistent with the unhappy wretch's life!
In Ireland he is sure to find my enemies.
Arran I've proved—the Netherlands I've tried,
But wilds and wars return him on my hands.

PHILIP.

Yet fear not, father, we'll make surer work;
The land has caves, the sea has whirlpools,
Where that which they suck in returns no more.

AUCHINDRANE.

I will know nought of it, hard-hearted boy!

PHILIP.

Hard-hearted! Why—my heart is soft as yours;
But then they must not feel remorse at once,
We can't afford such wasteful tenderness:
I can mouth forth remorse as well as you.
Be executioner, and I'll be chaplain,
And say as mild and moving things as you can;
But one of us must keep his steely temper.

AUCHINDRANE.

Do thou the deed—I cannot look on it.

PHILIP.

So be it—walk with me—MacLellan brings him.
The boat lies moor'd within that reach of rock,
And 'twill require our greatest strength combined

To launch it from the beach. Meantime, MacLellan
Brings our man hither.—See the twinkling light
That glances in the tower.

AUCHINDRANE.

Let us withdraw—for should he spy us suddenly,
He may suspect us, and alarm the family.

PHILIP.

Fear not, MacLellan has his trust and confidence,
Bought with a few sweet words and welcomes home.

AUCHINDRANE.

But think you that the Ranger may be trusted?

PHILIP.

I'll answer for him.—Let's go float the shallop.

[*They go off, and as they leave the Stage,* MACLELLAN *is seen descending from the Tower with* QUENTIN. *The former bears a dark lantern. They come upon the Stage.*

MACLELLAN (*shewing the light*).

So—bravely done—that's the last ledge of rocks,
And we are on the sands.—I have broke your slumbers
Somewhat untimely.

QUENTIN.

Do not think so, friend.
These six years past I have been used to stir
When the réveille rung; and that, believe me,
Chooses the hours for rousing me at random,
And, having given its summons, yields no licence
To indulge a second slumber. Nay, more, I'll tell thee,

That, like a pleased child, I was e'en too happy
For sound repose.

MACLELLAN.

The greater fool were you.
Men should enjoy the moments given to slumber;
For who can tell how soon may be the waking,
Or where we shall have leave to sleep again?

QUENTIN.

The God of Slumber comes not at command.
Last night the blood danced merry through my veins;
Instead of finding this our land of Carrick
The dreary waste my fears had apprehended,
I saw thy wife, MacLellan, and thy daughter,
And had a brother's welcome;—saw thee, too,
Renew'd my early friendship with you both,
And felt once more that I had friends and country.
So keen the joy that tingled through my system,
Join'd with the searching powers of yonder wine,
That I am glad to leave my feverish lair,
Although my hostess smooth'd my couch herself,
To cool my brow upon this moonlight beach,
Gaze on the moonlight dancing on the waves.
Such scenes are wont to soothe me into melancholy;
But such the hurry of my spirits now,
That every thing I look on makes me laugh.

MACLELLAN.

I 've seen but few so gamesome, Master Quentin,
Being roused from sleep so suddenly as you were.

QUENTIN.

Why, there's the jest on't. Your old castle's haunted.
In vain the host—in vain the lovely hostess,
In kind addition to all means of rest,
Add their best wishes for our sound repose,
When some hobgoblin brings a pressing message:
Montgomery presently must see his sergeant,
And up gets Hildebrand, and off he trudges.
I can't but laugh to think upon the grin
With which he doff'd the kerchief he had twisted
Around his brows, and put his morion on—
Ha! ha! ha! ha!

MACLELLAN.

I'm glad to see you merry, Quentin.

QUENTIN.

Why, faith, my spirits are but transitory,
And you may live with me a month or more,
And never see me smile. Then some such trifle
As yonder little maid of yours would laugh at,
Will serve me for a theme of merriment—
Even now, I scarce can keep my gravity;
We were so snugly settled in our quarters,
With full intent to let the sun be high
Ere we should leave our beds—and first the one
And then the other's summon'd briefly forth,
To the old tune, "Black Bandsmen, up and march!"

MACLELLAN.

Well! you shall sleep anon—rely upon it—
And make up time misspent. Meantime, methinks,

You are so merry on your broken slumbers,
You ask not why I call'd you.

QUENTIN.

I can guess,
You lack my aid to search the weir for seals,
You lack my company to stalk a deer.
Think you I have forgot your silvan tasks,
Which oft you have permitted me to share,
Till days that we were rivals?

MACLELLAN.

You have memory
Of that too?—

QUENTIN.

Like the memory of a dream,
Delusion far too exquisite to last.

MACLELLAN.

You guess not then for what I call you forth.
It was to meet a friend—

QUENTIN.

What friend? Thyself excepted,
The good old man who 's gone to see Montgomery,
And one to whom I once gave dearer title,
I know not in wide Scotland man or woman
Whom I could name a friend.

MACLELLAN.

Thou art mistaken.
There is a Baron, and a powerful one——

QUENTIN.

There flies my fit of mirth. You have a grave
And alter'd man before you.

MACLELLAN.

Compose yourself, there is no cause for fear—
He will and must speak with you.

QUENTIN.

Spare me the meeting, Niel, I cannot see him.
Say, I'm just landed on my native earth;
Say, that I will not cumber it a day;
Say, that my wretched thread of poor existence
Shall be drawn out in solitude and exile,
Where never memory of so mean a thing
Again shall cross his path—but do not ask me
To see or speak again with that dark man!

MACLELLAN.

Your fears are now as foolish as your mirth—
What should the powerful Knight of Auchindrane
In common have with such a man as thou?

QUENTIN.

No matter what—Enough, I will not see him.

MACLELLAN.

He is thy master, and he claims obedience.

QUENTIN.

My master? Ay, my task-master—Ever since
I could write man, his hand hath been upon me;
No step I've made but cumber'd with his chain,
And I am weary on't—I will not see him.

MACLELLAN.

You must and shall—there is no remedy.

QUENTIN.

Take heed that you compel me not to find one.
I've seen the wars since we had strife together;

To put my late experience to the test
Were something dangerous—Ha, I am betray'd!

[*While the latter part of this dialogue is passing,* AUCHINDRANE *and* PHILIP *enter on the Stage from behind, and suddenly present themselves.*

AUCHINDRANE.

What says the runagate?

QUENTIN (*laying aside all appearance of resistance*).

Nothing, you are my fate;
And in a shape more fearfully resistless,
My evil angel could not stand before me.

AUCHINDRANE.

And so you scruple, slave, at my command,
To meet me when I deign to ask thy presence?

QUENTIN.

No, sir; I had forgot—I am your bond-slave;
But sure a passing thought of independence,
For which I 've seen whole nations doing battle,
Was not, in one who has so long enjoy'd it,
A crime beyond forgiveness.

AUCHINDRANE.

We shall see:
Thou wert my vassal, born upon my land,
Bred by my bounty—It concerned me highly,
Thou know'st it did—and yet against my charge
Again I find thy worthlessness in Scotland.

QUENTIN.

Alas! the wealthy and the powerful know not

How very dear to those who have least share in't,
Is that sweet word of country! The poor exile
Feels, in each action of the varied day,
His doom of banishment. The very air
Cools not his brow as in his native land;
The scene is strange, the food is loathly to him;
The language, nay, the music jars his ear.[1]
Why should I, guiltless of the slightest crime,
Suffer a punishment which, sparing life,
Deprives that life of all which men hold dear?

AUCHINDRANE.

Hear ye the serf I bred, begin to reckon,
Upon his rights and pleasure! Who am I—
Thou abject, who am I, whose will thou thwartest?

PHILIP.

Well spoke, my pious sire. There goes remorse!
Let once thy precious pride take fire, and then,
MacLellan, you and I may have small trouble.

QUENTIN.

Your words are deadly, and your power resistless;
I'm in your hands—but, surely, less than life
May give you the security you seek,
Without commission of a mortal crime.

AUCHINDRANE.

Who is't would deign to think upon thy life?
I but require of thee to speed to Ireland,
Where thou mayst sojourn for some little space
Having due means of living dealt to thee,

[1] [MS.—"The strains of foreign music jar his ear."

And, when it suits the changes of the times,
Permission to return.

QUENTIN.

Noble my lord,
I am too weak to combat with your pleasure;
Yet, O, for mercy's sake, and for the sake
Of that dear land which is our common mother,
Let me not part in darkness from my country!
Pass but an hour or two, and every cape,
Headland, and bay, shall gleam with new-born light,
And I 'll take boat as gaily as the bird
That soars to meet the morning.
Grant me but this—to shew no darker thoughts
Are on your heart than those your speech expresses!

PHILIP.

A modest favour, friend, is this you ask!
Are we to pace the beach like watermen,
Waiting your worship's pleasure to take boat?
No, by my faith! you go upon the instant.
The boat lies ready, and the ship receives you
Near to the point of Turnberry.—Come, we wait you;
Bestir you!

QUENTIN.

I obey.—Then farewell, Scotland,
And Heaven forgive my sins, and grant that mercy,
Which mortal man deserves not!

AUCHINDRANE (*speaks aside to his Son*).

What signal
Shall let me know 'tis done?

PHILIP.

When the light is quench'd,
Your fears for Quentin Blane are at an end.—
(*To* QUENTIN.) Come, comrade, come, we must
begin our voyage.

QUENTIN.

But when, O when to end it!

[*He goes off reluctantly with* PHILIP *and* MACLELLAN. AUCHINDRANE *stands looking after them. The Moon becomes overclouded, and the Stage dark.* AUCHINDRANE, *who has gazed fixedly and eagerly after those who have left the Stage, becomes animated, and speaks.*

AUCHINDRANE.

It is no fallacy!—The night is dark,
The moon has sunk before the deepening clouds;
I cannot on the murky beach distinguish
The shallop from the rocks which lie beside it;
I cannot see tall Philip's floating plume,
Nor trace the sullen brow of Niel MacLellan;
Yet still that caitiff's visage is before me,
With chattering teeth, mazed look, and bristling hair,
As he stood here this moment!—Have I changed
My human eyes for those of some night prowler,
The wolf's, the tiger-cat's, or the hoarse bird's
That spies its prey at midnight? I can see him—
Yes, I can see him, seeing no one else—
And well it is I do so. In his absence,

Strange thoughts of pity mingled with my purpose,
And moved remorse within me—But they vanish'd
Whene'er he stood a living man before me;
Then my antipathy awaked within me,
Seeing its object close within my reach,
Till I could scarce forbear him.[1]—How they linger!
The boat's not yet to sea!—I ask myself,
What has the poor wretch done to wake my hatred—
Docile, obedient, and in sufferance patient?—
As well demand what evil has the hare
Done to the hound that courses her in sport.
Instinct infallible supplies the reason—
And that must plead my cause.—The vision's gone!
Their boat now walks the waves; a single gleam,
Now seen now lost, is all that marks her course;
That soon shall vanish too—then all is over!—
Would it were o'er, for in this moment lies
The agony of ages![2]—Now, 'tis gone—
And all is acted!—no—she breasts again
The opposing wave, and bears the tiny sparkle
Upon her crest—(*A faint cry heard as from seaward.*)
Ha! there was fatal evidence,

[1] [MS.———"my antipathy,
Strong source of inward hate, arose within me,
Seeing its object was within my reach,
And scarcely could forbear."]

[2] [MS.———"In that moment, o'er his soul
Winters of memory seem'd to roll."
BYRON—*The Giaour.*]

All 's over now, indeed!—The light is quench'd—
And Quentin, source of all my fear, exists not.—
The morning tide shall sweep his corpse to sea,
And hide all memory of this stern night's work.

[*He walks in a slow and deeply meditative manner towards the side of the Stage, and suddenly meets* MARION, *the wife of* MACLELLAN, *who has descended from the Castle.*

Now, how to meet Dunbar—Heaven guard my senses!—
Stand! who goes there?—Do spirits walk the earth
Ere yet they 've left the body!

MARION.

Is it you,
My lord, on this wild beach at such an hour?

AUCHINDRANE.

It is MacLellan's wife, in search of him,
Or of her lover—of the murderer,
Or of the murder'd man.—Go to, Dame Marion,
Men have their hunting-gear to give an eye to,
Their snares and trackings for their game. But women
Should shun the night air. A young wife also,
Still more a handsome one, should keep her pillow
Till the sun gives example for her wakening.
Come, dame, go back—back to your bed again.

MARION.

Hear me, my lord! there have been sights and sounds
That terrified my child and me—Groans, screams,
As if of dying seamen, came from ocean—

A corpse-light danced upon the crested waves
For several minutes' space, then sunk at once.
When we retired to rest we had two guests,
Besides my husband Niel—I 'll tell your lordship
Who the men were——

AUCHINDRANE.

Pshaw, woman, can you think
That I have any interest in your gossips?
Please your own husband, and that you may please him,
Get thee to bed, and shut up doors, good-dame.
Were I MacLellan, I should scarce be satisfied
To find thee wandering here in mist and moonlight,—
When silence should be in thy habitation,
And sleep upon thy pillow.

MARION.

Good my lord,
This is a holyday.—By an ancient custom
Our children seek the shore at break of day,
And gather shells, and dance, and play, and sport them
In honour of the Ocean. Old men say [Isabel
The custom is derived from heathen times. Our
Is mistress of the feast, and you may think
She is awake already, and impatient
To be the first shall stand upon the beach,
And bid the sun good-morrow.

AUCHINDRANE.

Ay, indeed?
Linger such dregs of heathendom among you?

And hath Knox preach'd, and Wishart died, in vain?
Take notice, I forbid these sinful practices,
And will not have my followers mingle in them.

MARION.

If such your honour's pleasure, I must go
And lock the door on Isabel; she is wilful,
And voice of mine will have small force to keep her
From the amusement she so long has dream'd of.
But I must tell your honour, the old people,
That were survivors of the former race,
Prophesied evil if this day should pass
Without due homage to the mighty Ocean.

AUCHINDRANE.

Folly and Papistry—Perhaps the ocean
Hath had his morning sacrifice already;
Or can you think the dreadful element,
Whose frown is death, whose roar the dirge of navies.
Will miss the idle pageant you prepare for?
I've business for you, too—the dawn advances—
I'd have thee lock thy little child in safety,
And get to Auchindrane before the sun rise;
Tell them to get a royal banquet ready,
As if a king were coming there to feast him.

MARION.

I will obey your pleasure. But my husband——

AUCHINDRANE.

I wait him on the beach, and bring him in
To share the banquet.

MARION.

But he has a friend,
Whom it would ill become him to intrude
Upon your hospitality.

AUCHINDRANE.

Fear not; his friend shall be made welcome too,
Should he return with Niel.

MARION.

He must—he will return—he has no option.

AUCHINDRANE.

[*Apart.*] Thus rashly do we deem of others' destiny—
He has indeed no option—but he comes not.
Begone on thy commission—I go this way
To meet thy husband.

[MARION *goes to her Tower, and after entering it is seen to come out, lock the door, and leave the Stage, as if to execute* AUCHINDRANE'S *commission. He, apparently going off in a different direction, has watched her from the side of the Stage, and on her departure speaks.*

AUCHINDRANE.

Fare thee well, fond woman,
Most dangerous of spies—thou prying, prating,
Spying, and telling woman! I've cut short
Thy dangerous testimony—hated word!
What other evidence have we cut short,
And by what fated means, this dreary morning!—

Bright lances here and helmets?—I must shift
To join the others. [*Exit.*

Enter from the other side the SERGEANT, *accompanied with an Officer and two Pikemen.*

SERGEANT.

'Twas in good time you came; a minute later
The knaves had ta'en my dollars and my life.

OFFICER.

You fought most stoutly. Two of them were down,
Ere we came to your aid.

SERGEANT.

Gramercy, halberd!
And well it happens, since your leader seeks,
This Quentin Blane, that you have fall'n on me;
None else can surely tell you where he hides,
Being in some fear, and bent to quit this province.

OFFICER.

'Twill do our Earl good service. He has sent
Despatches into Holland for this Quentin.

SERGEANT.

I left him two hours since in yonder tower,
Under the guard of one who smoothly spoke,
Although he look'd but roughly—I will chide him
For bidding me go forth with yonder traitor.

OFFICER.

Assure yourself 'twas a concerted stratagem.
Montgomery 's been at Holyrood for months,
And can have sent no letter—'twas a plan

On you and on your dollars, and a base one,
To which this Ranger was most likely privy;
Such men as he hang on our fiercer barons,
The ready agents of their lawless will;
Boys of the belt, who aid their master's pleasures,
And in his moods ne'er scruple his injunctions.
But haste, for now we must unkennel Quentin;
I've strictest charge concerning him.

SERGEANT.

Go up, then, to the tower. [him
You've younger limbs than mine—there shall you find
Lounging and snoring, like a lazy cur
Before a stable door; it is his practice.

[*The* OFFICER *goes up to the Tower, and after knocking without receiving an answer, turns the key which* MARION *had left in the lock, and enters;* ISABEL, *dressed as if for her dance, runs out and descends to the Stage; the* OFFICER *follows.*

OFFICER.

There's no one in the house, this little maid
Excepted——

ISABEL.

And for me, I'm there no longer,
And will not be again for three hours good:
I'm gone to join my playmates on the sands.

OFFICER (*detaining her*).

You shall, when you have told to me distinctly
Where are the guests who slept up there last night.

ISABEL.

Why, there is the old man, he stands beside you,
The merry old man, with the glistening hair;
He left the tower at midnight, for my father
Brought him a letter.

SERGEANT.

In ill hour I left you,
I wish to Heaven that I had stay'd with you;
There is a nameless horror that comes o'er me.—
Speak, pretty maiden, tell us what chanced next,
And thou shalt have thy freedom.

ISABEL.

After you went last night, my father
Grew moody, and refused to doff his clothes,
Or go to bed, as sometimes he will do [night,
When their is aught to chafe him. Until past mid-
He wander'd to and fro, then call'd the stranger,
The gay young man, that sung such merry songs,
Yet ever look'd most sadly whilst he sung them,
And forth they went together.

OFFICER.

And you 've seen
Or heard nought of them since?

ISABEL.

Seen surely nothing, and I cannot think
That they have lot or share in what I heard.
I heard my mother praying, for the corpse-lights
Were dancing on the waves; and at one o'clock,
Just as the Abbey steeple toll'd the knell,

There was a heavy plunge upon the waters,
And some one cried aloud for mercy!—mercy!
It was the water-spirit, sure, which promised
Mercy to boat and fisherman, if we
Perform'd to-day's rites duly. Let me go—
I am to lead the ring.

OFFICER (*to* SERGEANT).

Detain her not. She cannot tell us more;
To give her liberty is the sure way [men,
To lure her parents homeward.—Strahan, take two
And should the father or the mother come,
Arrest them both, or either. Auchindrane
May come upon the beach; arrest him also,
But do not state a cause. I'll back again,
And take directions from my Lord Dunbar.
Keep you upon the beach, and have an eye
To all that passes there. [*Exeunt separately.*

SCENE II.

Scene changes to a remote and rocky part of the Sea-beach. Enter AUCHINDRANE *meeting* PHILIP.

AUCHINDRANE.

The devil's brought his legions to this beach,
That wont to be so lonely; morions, lances,
Shew in the morning beam as thick as glowworms
At summer midnight.

PHILIP.

I'm right glad to see them,

Be they whoe'er they may, so they are mortal;
For I've contended with a lifeless foe,
And I have lost the battle. I would give
A thousand crowns to hear a mortal steel
Ring on a mortal harness.

AUCHINDRANE.

How now!—Art mad, or hast thou done the turn—
The turn we came for, and must live or die by?

PHILIP.

'Tis done, if man can do it; but I doubt
If this unhappy wretch have Heaven's permission
To die by mortal hands.

AUCHINDRANE.

Where is he?—where's MacLellan?

PHILIP.

In the deep—
Both in the deep, and what's immortal of them
Gone to the judgment-seat, where we must meet them.

AUCHINDRANE.

MacLellan dead, and Quentin too?—So be it
To all that menace ill to Auchindrane,
Or have the power to injure him!—Thy words
Are full of comfort, but thine eye and look
Have in this pallid gloom a ghastliness,
Which contradicts the tidings of thy tongue.[1]

[1] [——"This man's brow, like to a title leaf,
Foretells the nature of a tragic volume;
Thou tremblest; and the whiteness in thy cheek
Is apter than thy tongue to tell thy errand."
2d King Henry IV.]

PHILIP.

Hear me, old man—There *is* a heaven above us.
As you have heard old Knox and Wishart preach,
Though little to your boot. The dreaded witness
Is slain, and silent. But his misused body
Comes right ashore, as if to cry for vengeance;
It rides the waters like a living thing,[1]
Erect, as if he trode the waves which bear him.

AUCHINDRANE.

Thou speakest frenzy, when sense is most required.

PHILIP.

Hear me yet more!—I say I did the deed
With all the coolness of a practised hunter
When dealing with a stag. I struck him overboard,
And with MacLellan's aid I held his head
Under the waters, while the Ranger tied
The weights we had provided to his feet.
We cast him loose when life and body parted,
And bid him speed for Ireland. But even then,
As in defiance of the words we spoke,
The body rose upright behind our stern,
One half in ocean, and one half in air,
And tided after as in chase of us.[2]

[1] [——"Walks the waters like a thing of life."
BYRON—*The Corsair.*]

[2] [This passage was probably suggested by a striking one in *Southey's Life of Nelson*, touching the corpse of the Neapolitan Prince Caraccioli, executed on board the Foudroyant, then the great British Admiral's flag-ship, in the bay of Naples in 1799. The circumstances of Caraccioli's trial and death form, it is almost

AUCHINDRANE.

It was enchantment!—Did you strike at it?

PHILIP.

Once and again. But blows avail'd no more
Than on a wreath of smoke, where they may break
The column for a moment, which unites
And is entire again. Thus the dead body
Sunk down before my oar, but rose unharm'd,
And dogg'd us closer still, as in defiance.

AUCHINDRANE.

'Twas Hell's own work!——

PHILIP,

MacLellan then grew restive

needless to observe, the most unpleasant chapter in Lord Nelson's history:

"The body," says Southey, "was carried out to a considerable distance and sunk in the bay, with three double-headed shot, weighing two hundred and fifty pounds, tied to its legs. Between two or three weeks afterwards, when the King (of Naples) was on board the Foudroyant, a Neapolitan fisherman came to the ship, and solemnly declared, that Caraccioli had risen from the bottom of the sea, and was coming as fast as he could to Naples, swimming half out of the water. Such an account was listened to like a tale of idle credulity. The day being fair, Nelson, to please the King, stood out to sea; but the ship had not proceeded far before a body was distinctly seen, upright in the water, and approaching them. It was recognised to be, indeed, the corpse of Caraccioli, which had risen and floated, while the great weights attached to the legs kept the body in a position like that of a living man. A fact so extraordinary astonished the King, and perhaps excited some feelings of superstitious fear, akin to regret. He gave permission for the body to be taken on shore, and receive Christian burial." *Life of Nelson*, chap. vi.]

And desperate in his fear, blasphemed aloud,
Cursing us both as authors of his ruin.
Myself was wellnigh frantic while pursued
By this dead shape, upon whose ghastly features
The changeful moonbeam spread a grisly light;
And, baited thus, I took the nearest way[1]
To insure his silence, and to quell his noise;
I used my dagger, and I flung him overboard,
And half expected his dead carcass also
Would join the chase—but he sunk down at once.

AUCHINDRANE.

He had enough of mortal sin about him,
To sink an argosy.

PHILIP.

But now resolve you what defence to make,
If Quentin's body shall be recognised;
For 'tis ashore already; and he bears
Marks of my handiwork; so does MacLellan.

AUCHINDRANE.

The concourse thickens still—Away, away!
We must avoid the multitude. [*They rush out.*

[1] [MS.—"And, baited by my slave, I used my dagger."]

SCENE III.

Scene changes to another part of the Beach. Children are seen dancing, and Villagers looking on. ISABEL *seems to take the management of the Dance.*

VILLAGE WOMAN.

How well she queens it, the brave little maiden!

VILLAGER.

Ay, they all queen it from their very cradle,
These willing slaves of haughty Auchindrane.
But now I hear the old man's reign is ended;—
'Tis well—he has been tyrant long enough.

SECOND VILLAGER.

Finlay, speak low, you interrupt the sports.

THIRD VILLAGER.

Look out to sea—There's something coming yonder,
Bound for the beach, will scare us from our mirth.

FOURTH VILLAGER.

Pshaw, it is but a sea-gull on the wing,
Between the wave and sky.

THIRD VILLAGER.

Thou art a fool,
Standing on solid land—'tis a dead body.

SECOND VILLAGER.

And if it be, he bears him like a live one,
Not prone and weltering like a drown'd corpse,
But bolt erect, as if he trode the waters,
And used them as his path.

FOURTH VILLAGER.

It is a merman,
And nothing of this earth, alive or dead.

[*By degrees all the Dancers break off from their sport, and stand gazing to seaward, while an object, imperfectly seen, drifts towards the Beach, and at length arrives among the rocks which border the tide.*

THIRD VILLAGER.

Perhaps it is some wretch who needs assistance;
Jasper, make in and see.

SECOND VILLAGER.

Not I, my friend;
E'en take the risk yourself, you'd put on others.

[HILDEBRAND *has entered, and heard the two last words.*

SERGEANT.

What, are you men?
Fear ye to look on what you must be one day?
I, who have seen a thousand dead and dying
Within a flight-shot square, will teach you how in war
We look upon the corpse when life has left it.

[*He goes to the back scene, and seems attempting to turn the body, which has come ashore with its face downwards.*

Will none of you come aid to turn the body?

ISABEL.

You 're cowards all.—I 'll help thee, good old man.

[*She goes to aid the* SERGEANT *with the body,*

and presently gives a cry, and faints. HILDEBRAND *comes forward. All crowd round him; he speaks with an expression of horror.*

SERGEANT.

'Tis Quentin Blane! Poor youth, his gloomy bodings
Have been the prologue to an act of darkness;
His feet are manacled, his bosom stabb'd,
And he is foully murder'd. The proud Knight
And his dark Ranger must have done this deed,
For which no common ruffian could have motive.

A PEASANT.

Caution were best, old man—Thou art a stranger,
The Knight is great and powerful.

SERGEANT.

Let it be so.
Call'd on by Heaven to stand forth an avenger,
I will not blench for fear of mortal man.
Have I not seen that when that innocent
Had placed her hands upon the murder'd body,
His gaping wounds,[1] that erst were soak'd with brine,
Burst forth with blood as ruddy as the cloud
Which now the sun doth rise on?

PEASANT.

What of that?

SERGEANT.

Nothing that can affect the innocent child,
But murder's guilt attaching to her father,

[1] [MS.—"His unblooded wounds," &c.]

Since the blood musters in the victim's veins
At the approach of what holds lease from him
Of all that parents can transmit to children. [stance.
And here comes one to whom I'll vouch the circum-

The EARL OF DUNBAR *enters with Soldiers and others, having* AUCHINDRANE *and* PHILIP *prisoners.*

DUNBAR.

Fetter the young ruffian and his trait'rous father!
[*They are made secure.*

AUCHINDRANE.

'Twas a lord spoke it—I have known a knight,
Sir George of Home, who had not dared to say so.

DUNBAR.

'Tis Heaven, not I, decides upon your guilt.
A harmless youth is traced within your power,
Sleeps in your Ranger's house—his friend at midnight
Is spirited away. Then lights are seen,
And groans are heard, and corpses come ashore
Mangled with daggers, while (*to* PHILIP) your dagger wears
The sanguine livery of recent slaughter:
Here, too, the body of a murder'd victim
Whom none but you had interest to remove),
Bleeds on a child's approach, because the daughter
Of one the abettor of the wicked deed.
All this, and other proofs corroborative,
Call on us briefly to pronounce the doom
We have in charge to utter.

AUCHINDRANE.

If my house perish, Heaven's will be done!
I wish not to survive it; but, O Philip,
Would one could pay the ransom for us both!

PHILIP.

Father, 'tis fitter that we both should die,
Leaving no heir behind.—The piety
Of a bless'd saint, the morals of an anchorite,
Could not atone thy dark hypocrisy,
Or the wild profligacy I have practised.
Ruin'd our house, and shatter'd be our towers,
And with them end the curse our sins have merited![1]

[*Exeunt.*

[1] ["The poet, in his play of Auchindrane, displayed real tragic power, and soothed all those who cried out before for a more direct story, and less of the retrospective. Several of the scenes are conceived and executed with all the powers of the best parts of *Waverley*. The verse, too, is more rough, natural, and nervous, than that of *Halidon Hill;* but, noble as the effort was, it was eclipsed so much by his splendid romances, that the public still complained that he had not done his best, and that his genius was not dramatic."—ALLAN CUNNINGHAM—*Athenæum*, 14th *Dec.* 1833.]

END OF AUCHINDRANE.

THE HOUSE OF ASPEN.

A TRAGEDY.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS attempt at dramatic composition was executed nearly thirty years since, when the magnificent works of Goethe and Schiller were for the first time made known to the British public, and received, as many now alive must remember, with universal enthusiasm. What we admire we usually attempt to imitate; and the author, not trusting to his own efforts, borrowed the substance of the story and a part of the diction from a dramatic romance called *Der Heilige Vehmé* (the Secret Tribunal), which fills the sixth volume of the *Sagen den Vorzeit* (Tales of Antiquity), by Beit Weber. The drama must be termed rather a rifacimento of the original than a translation, since the whole is compressed, and the incidents and dialogue occasionally much varied. The imitator is ignorant of the real name of his ingenious

contemporary, and has been informed that of Beit Weber is fictitious.

The late Mr John Kemble at one time had some desire to bring out the play at Drury Lane, then adorned by himself and his matchless sister, who were to have supported the characters of the unhappy son and mother: but great objections appeared to this proposal. There was danger that the main spring of the story—the binding engagements formed by members of the secret tribunal—might not be sufficiently felt by an English audience, to whom the nature of that singularly mysterious institution was unknown from early association. There was also, according to Mr Kemble's experienced opinion, too much blood, too much of the dire catastrophe of Tom Thumb, when all die on the stage. It was besides esteemed perilous to place the fifth act and the parade and show of the secret conclave, at the mercy of underlings and scene-shifters, who, by a ridiculous motion, gesture, or accent, might turn what should be grave into farce.

The author, or rather the translator, willingly

acquiesced in this reasoning, and never afterwards made any attempt to gain the honour of the buskin. The German taste also, caricatured by a number of imitators who, incapable of copying the sublimity of the great masters of the school, supplied its place by extravagance and bombast, fell into disrepute, and received a *coup de grace* from the joint efforts of the late lamented Mr Canning and Mr Frere. The effect of their singularly happy piece of ridicule, called *The Rovers*, a mock play which appeared in the *Anti-Jacobin*, was, that the German school, with its beauties and its defects, passed completely out of fashion, and the following scenes were consigned to neglect and obscurity. Very lately, however, the writer chanced to look them over with feelings very different from those of the adventurous period of his literary life during which they had been written, and yet with such as perhaps a reformed libertine might regard the illegitimate production of an early amour. There is something to be ashamed of, certainly; but, after all, paternal vanity whispers that the child has a resemblance to the father.

To this it need only be added, that there are in existence so many manuscript copies of the following play, that if it should not find its way to the public sooner, it is certain to do so when the author can no more have any opportunity of correcting the press, and consequently at greater disadvantage than at present. Being of too small a size or consequence for a separate publication, the piece is sent as a contribution to the *Keepsake*, where its demerits may be hidden amid the beauties of more valuable articles.

ABBOTSFORD, 1*st April* 1829.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

RUDIGER, *Baron of Aspen, an old German warrior.*

GEORGE OF ASPEN,
HENRY OF ASPEN, } *sons to Rudiger.*

RODERIC, *Count of Maltingen, chief of a department of the Invisible Tribunal, and the hereditary enemy of the family of Aspen.*

WILLIAM, *Baron of Wolfstein, ally of Count Roderic.*

BERTRAM OF EBERSDORF, *brother to the former husband of the Baroness of Aspen, disguised as a minstrel.*

DUKE OF BAVARIA.

WICKERD,
REYNOLD, } *followers of the House of Aspen.*

CONRAD, *Page of Honour to Henry of Aspen.*

MARTIN, *Squire to George of Aspen.*

HUGO, *Squire to Count Roderic.*

PETER, *an ancient domestic of Rudiger.*

FATHER LUDOVIC, *Chaplain to Rudiger.*

WOMEN.

ISABELLA, *formerly married to Arnolf of Ebersdorf, now wife of Rudiger.*

GERTRUDE, *Isabella's niece, betrothed to Henry.*

Soldiers, Judges of the Invisible Tribunal, &c. &c.

Scene.—The Castle of Ebersdorf in Bavaria, the ruins of Griefenhaus, and the adjacent country.

THE HOUSE OF ASPEN.

ACT I

SCENE I.

An ancient Gothic chamber in the Castle of Ebersdorf. Spears, crossbows, and arms, with the horns of buffaloes and of deer, are hung round the wall. An antique buffet with beakers and stone bottles.

RUDIGER, *Baron of Aspen, and his lady,* ISABELLA, *are discovered sitting at a large oaken table.*

Rud. A plague upon that roan horse! Had he not stumbled with me at the ford after our last skirmish, I had been now with my sons. And yonder the boys are, hardly three miles off, battling with Count Roderic, and their father must lie here like a worm-eaten manuscript in a convent library! Out upon it! Out upon it! Is it not hard that a warrior, who has travelled so many leagues to display the cross on the walls of Zion, should be now unable to lift a spear before his own castle gate!

Isa. Dear husband, your anxiety retards your recovery.

Rud. May be so; but not less than your silence and melancholy! Here have I sate this month, and more, since that cursed fall! Neither hunting, nor feasting, nor lance-breaking for me! And my sons—George enters cold and reserved, as if he had the weight of the empire on his shoulders, utters by syllables a cold "How is it with you?" and shuts himself up for days in his solitary chamber—Henry, my cheerful Henry—

Isa. Surely, he at least—

Rud. Even he forsakes me, and skips up the tower staircase like lightning to join your fair ward, Gertrude, on the battlements. I cannot blame him; for, by my knightly faith, were I in his place, I think even these bruised bones would hardly keep me from her side. Still, however, here I must sit alone.

Isa. Not alone, dear husband. Heaven knows what I would do to soften your confinement.

Rud. Tell me not of that, lady. When I first knew thee, Isabella, the fair maid of Arnheim was the joy of her companions, and breathed life wherever she came. Thy father married thee to Arnolf of Ebersdorf—not much with thy will, 'tis true—(*she hides her face.*) Nay—forgive me, Isabella—but that is over—he died, and the ties between us, which thy marriage had broken, were renewed—but the sunshine of my Isabella's light heart returned no more.

Isa. (*weeping*). Beloved Rudiger, you search my

very soul! Why will you recall past times—days of spring that can never return? Do I not love thee more than ever wife loved husband?

Rud. (*stretches out his arms—she embraces him*). And therefore art thou ever my beloved Isabella. But still, is it not true? Has not thy cheerfulness vanished since thou hast become Lady of Aspen? Dost thou repent of thy love to Rudiger?

Isa. Alas! no! never! never!

Rud. Then why dost thou herd with monks and priests, and leave thy old knight alone, when, for the first time in his stormy life, he has rested for weeks within the walls of his castle? Hast thou committed a crime from which Rudiger's love cannot absolve thee?

Isa. O many! many!

Rud. Then be this kiss thy penance. And tell me, Isabella, hast thou not founded a convent, and endowed it with the best of thy late husband's lands? Ay, and with a vineyard which I could have prized as well as the sleek monks. Dost thou not daily distribute alms to twenty pilgrims? Dost thou not cause ten masses to be sung each night for the repose of thy late husband's soul?

Isa. It will not know repose.

Rud. Well, well—God's peace be with Arnolf of Ebersdorf; the mention of him makes thee ever sad, though so many years have passed since his death.

Isa. But at present, dear husband, have I not the most just cause for anxiety? Are not Henry and

George, our beloved sons, at this very moment perhaps engaged in doubtful contest with our hereditary foe, Count Roderic of Maltingen?

Rud. Now, there lies the difference: you sorrow that they are in danger, I that I cannot share it with them.—Hark! I hear horses' feet on the drawbridge. Go to the window, Isabella.

Isa. (*at the window*). It is Wickerd, your squire.

Rud. Then shall we have tidings of George and Henry. (*Enter* WICKERD.) How now, Wickerd? Have you come to blows yet?

Wic. Not yet, noble sir.

Rud. Not yet?—shame on the boys' dallying—what wait they for?

Wic. The foe is strongly posted, sir knight, upon the Wolfshill, near the ruins of Griefenhaus; therefore your noble son, George of Aspen, greets you well, and requests twenty more men-at-arms, and, after they have joined him, he hopes, with the aid of St Theodore, to send you news of victory.

Rud. (*attempts to rise hastily*). Saddle my black barb; I will head them myself. (*Sits down.*) A murrain on that stumbling roan! I had forgot my dislocated bones. Call Reynold, Wickerd, and bid him take all whom he can spare from defence of the castle—(WICKERD *is going*)——and ho! Wickerd, carry with you my black barb, and bid George charge upon him. (*Exit* WICKERD.) Now see, Isabella, if I disregard the boy's safety; I send him the best horse ever knight

bestrode. When we lay before Ascalon, indeed, I had a bright bay Persian—Thou dost not heed me.

Isa. Forgive me, dear husband; are not our sons in danger? Will not our sins be visited upon them? Is not their present situation——

Rud. Situation? I know it well: as fair a field for open fight as I ever hunted over: see here—(*makes lines on the table*)—here is the ancient castle of Griefenhaus in ruins, here the Wolfshill; and here the marsh on the right.

Isa. The marsh of Griefenhaus!

Rud. Yes; by that the boys must pass.

Isa. Pass there! (*Apart.*) Avenging Heaven! thy hand is upon us! [*Exit hastily.*

Rud. Whither now? Whither now? She is gone. Thus it goes. Peter! Peter! (*Enter* PETER.) Help me to the gallery, that I may see them on horseback. [*Exit, leaning on* PETER.

SCENE II.

The inner Court of the Castle of Ebersdorf; a quadrangle, surrounded with Gothic buildings; troopers, followers of RUDIGER, *pass and repass in haste, as if preparing for an excursion.*

WICKERD *comes forward.*

Wic. What, ho! Reynold! Reynold!—By our Lady the spirit of the Seven Sleepers is upon him—So ho not mounted yet? Reynold!

Enter REYNOLD.

Rey. Here! here! A devil choke thy bawling! think'st thou old Reynold is not as ready for a skirmish as thou?

Wic. Nay, nay; I did but jest; but, by my sooth, it were a shame should our youngsters have yoked with Count Roderic before we graybeards come.

Rey. Heaven forefend! Our troopers are but saddling their horses; five minutes more, and we are in our stirrups, and then let Count Roderic sit fast.

Wic. A plague on him! he has ever lain hard on the skirts of our noble master.

Rey. Especially since he was refused the hand of our lady's niece, the pretty Lady Gertrude.

Wic. Ay, marry! would nothing less serve the fox of Maltingen than the lovely lamb of our young Baron Henry! By my sooth, Reynold, when I look upon these two lovers, they make me full twenty years younger; and when I meet the man that would divide them—I say nothing—but let him look to it.

Rey. And how fare our young lords?

Wic. Each well in his humour.—Baron George stern and cold, according to his wont, and his brother as cheerful as ever.

Rey. Well!—Baron Henry for me.

Wic. Yet George saved thy life.

Rey. True—with as much indifference as if he had been snatching a chestnut out of the fire. Now Baron Henry wept for my danger and my wounds. There-

fore George shall ever command my life, but Henry my love.

Wic. Nay, Baron George shews his gloomy spirit even by the choice of a favourite.

Rey. Ay—Martin, formerly the squire of Arnolf of Ebersdorf, his mother's first husband.—I marvel he could not have fitted himself with an attendant from among the faithful followers of his worthy father, whom Arnolf and his adherents used to hate as the Devil hates holy-water. But Martin is a good soldier, and has stood toughly by George in many a hard brunt.

Wic. The knave is sturdy enough, but so sulky withal—I have seen, brother Reynold, that when Martin shewed his moody visage at the banquet, our noble mistress has dropped the wine she was raising to her lips, and exchanged her smiles for a ghastly frown, as if sorrow went by sympathy, as kissing goes by favour.

Rey. His appearance reminds her of her first husband, and thou hast well seen *that* makes her ever sad.

Wic. Dost thou marvel at that? She was married to Arnolf by a species of force, and they say that before his death he compelled her to swear never to espouse Rudiger. The priests will not absolve her for the breach of that vow, and therefore she is troubled in mind. For, d'ye mark me, Reynold—— [*Bugle sounds.*

Rey. A truce to your preaching! To horse! and a blessing on our arms!

Wic. St George grant it! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The gallery of the Castle, terminating in a large balcony commanding a distant prospect.—Voices, bugle-horns, kettle-drums, trampling of horses, &c., are heard without.

RUDIGER, *leaning on* PETER, *looks from the balcony.* GERTRUDE *and* ISABELLA *are near him.*

Rud. There they go at length—look, Isabella! look, my pretty Gertrude—these are the iron-handed warriors who shall tell Roderic what it will cost him to force thee from my protection—(*Flourish without,* RUDIGER *stretches his arms from the balcony.*) Go, my children, and God's blessing with you. Look at my black barb, Gertrude. That horse shall let daylight in through a phalanx, were it twenty pikes deep. Shame on it that I cannot mount him! Seest thou how fierce old Reynold looks?

Ger. I can hardly know my friends in their armour.

[*The bugles and kettle-drums are heard as at a greater distance.*

Rud. Now I could tell every one of their names, even at this distance; ay, and were they covered, as I have seen them, with dust and blood. He on the dapple-grey is Wickerd—a hardy fellow, but somewhat given to prating. That is young Conrad who gallops so fast, page to thy Henry, my girl.

[*Bugles, &c., at a greater distance still.*

Ger. Heaven guard them. Alas! the voice of war that calls the blood into your cheeks chills and freezes mine.

Rud. Say not so. It is glorious, my girl, glorious! See how their armour glistens as they wind round yon hill! how their spears glimmer amid the long train of dust. Hark! you can still hear the faint notes of their trumpets—(*Bugles very faint.*)—And Rudiger, old Rudiger with the iron arm, as the crusaders used to call me, must remain behind with the priests and the women. Well! well!—(*Sings.*)

"It was a knight to battle rode,
And as his war-horse he bestrode."—

Fill me a bowl of wine, Gertrude; and do thou, Peter, call the minstrel who came hither last night.—(*Sings.*)

"Off rode the horsemen, dash, sa, sa!
And stroked his whiskers, tra, la, la."—

(PETER *goes out.*—RUDIGER *sits down, and* GERTRUDE *helps him with wine.*) Thanks, my love. It tastes ever best from thy hand. Isabella, here is glory and victory to our boys—(*Drinks.*)—Wilt thou not pledge me?

Isa. To their safety, and God grant it!—(*Drinks.*)

Enter BERTRAM *as a minstrel, with a Boy bearing his harp.—Also* PETER.

Rud. Thy name, minstrel?

Ber. Minhold, so please you.

Rud. Art thou a German?

Ber. Yes, noble sir; and of this province.

Rud. Sing me a song of battle.

[BERTRAM *sings to the harp.*

Rud. Thanks, minstrel: well sung and lustily. What sayst thou, Isabella?

Isa. I marked him not.

Rud. Nay, in sooth you are too anxious. Cheer up. And thou, too, my lovely Gertrude: in a few hours thy Henry shall return, and twine his laurels into a garland for thy hair. He fights for thee, and he must conquer.

Ger. Alas! must blood be spilled for a silly maiden?

Rud. Surely: for what should knights break lances but for honour and ladies' love—ha, minstrel?

Ber. So please you—also to punish crimes.

Rud. Out upon it! wouldst have us executioners, minstrel? Such work would disgrace our blades. We leave malefactors to the Secret Tribunal.

Isa. Merciful God! Thou hast spoken a word, Rudiger, of dreadful import.

Ger. They say that, unknown and invisible themselves, these awful judges are ever present with the guilty; that the past and the present misdeeds, the secrets of the confessional, nay, the very thoughts of the heart, are before them; that their doom is as sure as that of fate, the means and executioners unknown.

Rud. They say true—the secrets of that association, and the names of those who compose it, are as inscrutable as the grave: we only know that it has taken deep root, and spread its branches wide. I sit

down each day in my hall, nor know I how many of these secret judges may surround me, all bound by the most solemn vow to avenge guilt. Once, and but once, a knight, at the earnest request and inquiries of the emperor, hinted that he belonged to the society: the next morning he was found slain in a forest: the poniard was left in the wound, and bore this label—"Thus do the invisible judges punish treachery."

Ger. Gracious! aunt, you grow pale.

Isa. A slight indisposition only.

Rud. And what of it all? We know our hearts are open to our Creator: shall we fear any earthly inspection? Come to the battlements; there we shall soonest descry the return of our warriors.

[*Exit* RUDIGER, *with* GERTRUDE *and* PETER.

Isa. Minstrel, send the chaplain hither. (*Exit* BERTRAM.) Gracious Heaven! the guileless innocence of my niece, the manly honesty of my upright-hearted Rudiger, become daily tortures to me. While he was engaged in active and stormy exploits, fear for his safety, joy when he returned to his castle, enabled me to disguise my inward anguish from others. But from myself—Judges of blood, that lie concealed in noontide as in midnight, who boast to avenge the hidden guilt, and to penetrate the recesses of the human breast, how blind is your penetration, how vain your dagger and your cord, compared to the conscience of the sinner!

Enter FATHER LUDOVIC.

Lud. Peace be with you, lady!

Isa. It is not with me: it is thy office to bring it.

Lud. And the cause is the absence of the young knights?

Isa. Their absence and their danger.

Lud. Daughter, thy hand has been stretched out in bounty to the sick and to the needy. Thou hast not denied a shelter to the weary, nor a tear to the afflicted. Trust in their prayers, and in those of the holy convent thou has founded; peradventure they will bring back thy children to thy bosom.

Isa. Thy brethren cannot pray for me or mine. Their vow binds them to pray night and day for another—to supplicate, without ceasing, the Eternal Mercy for the soul of one who—Oh, only Heaven knows how much he needs their prayer!

Lud. Unbounded is the mercy of Heaven. The soul of thy former husband——

Isa. I charge thee, priest, mention not the word. (*Apart.*) Wretch that I am, the meanest menial in my train has power to goad me to madness!

Lud. Hearken to me, daughter; thy crime against Arnolf of Ebersdorf cannot bear in the eye of Heaven so deep a dye of guilt.

Isa. Repeat that once more; say once again that it cannot—cannot bear so deep a dye. Prove to me that ages of the bitterest penance, that tears of the dearest blood, can erase such guilt. Prove but *that* to me, and I will build thee an abbey which shall put to shame the fairest fane in Christendom.

Lud. Nay, nay, daughter, your conscience is over-

tender. Supposing that, under dread of the stern Arnolf, you swore never to marry your present husband, still the exacting such an oath was unlawful, and the breach of it venial.

Isa. (*resuming her composure*). Be it so, good father; I yield to thy better reasons. And now tell me, has thy pious care achieved the task I intrusted to thee?

Lud. Of superintending the erection of thy new hospital for pilgrims? I have, noble lady: and last night the minstrel now in the castle lodged there.

Isa. Wherefore came he then to the castle?

Lud. Reynold brought the commands of the baron.

Isa. Whence comes he, and what is his tale? When he sung before Rudiger, I thought that long before I had heard such tones—seen such a face.

Lud. It is possible you may have seen him, lady, for he boasts to have been known to Arnolf of Ebersdorf, and to have lived formerly in this castle. He inquires much after *Martin*, Arnolf's squire.

Isa. Go, Ludovic—go quick, good father, seek him out, give him this purse, and bid him leave the castle, and speed him on his way.

Lud. May I ask why, noble lady?

Isa. Thou art inquisitive, priest: I honour the servants of God, but I foster not the prying spirit of a monk. Begone!

Lud. But the baron, lady, will expect a reason why I dismiss his guest?

Isa. True, true (*recollecting herself*); pardon my

warmth, good father, I was thinking of the cuckoo that grows too big for the nest of the sparrow, and strangles its fostermother. Do no such birds roost in convent walls?

Lud. Lady, I understand you not.

Isa. Well then, say to the baron, that I have dismissed long ago all the attendants of the man of whom thou hast spoken, and that I wish to have none of them beneath my roof.

Lud. (*inquisitively*). Except Martin?

Isa. (*sharply*). Except Martin! who saved the life of my son George? Do as I command thee. [*Exit.*

Manet LUDOVIC.

Lud. Ever the same—stern and peremptory to others as rigorous to herself; haughty even to me, to whom, in another mood, she has knelt for absolution, and whose knees she has bathed in tears. I cannot fathom her. The unnatural zeal with which she performs her dreadful penances cannot be religion, for shrewdly I guess she believes not in their blessed efficacy. Well for her that she is the foundress of our convent, otherwise we might not have erred in denouncing her as a heretic! [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A woodland prospect.—Through a long avenue, half grown up by brambles, are discerned in the background the ruins of the ancient castle of Griefenhaus.—The distant noise of battle is heard during this scene.

Enter GEORGE OF ASPEN, *armed with a battle-axe in his hand, as from horseback. He supports* MARTIN, *and brings him forward.*

Geo. Lay thee down here, old friend. The enemy's horsemen will hardly take their way among these brambles, through which I have dragged thee.

Mar. Oh, do not leave me! leave me not an instant! My moments are now but few, and I would profit by them.

Geo. Martin, you forget yourself and me—I must back to the field.

Mar. (*attempts to rise*). Then drag me back thither also; I cannot die but in your presence—I dare not be alone. Stay, to give peace to my parting soul.

Geo. I am no priest, Martin. (*Going.*)

Mar. (*raising himself with great pain*). Baron George of Aspen, I saved thy life in battle: for that good deed, hear me but one moment.

Geo. I hear thee, my poor friend. (*Returning.*)

Mar. But come close—very close. See'st thou, sir knight—this wound I bore for thee—and this—and this—dost thou not remember?

Geo. I do.

Mar. I have served thee since thou wast a child; served thee faithfully—was never from thy side.

Geo. Thou hast.

Mar. And now I die in thy service.

Geo. Thou mayst recover.

Mar. I cannot. By my long service—by my scars—by this mortal gash, and by the death that I am to die—oh, do not hate me for what I am now to unfold!

Geo. Be assured I can never hate thee.

Mar. Ah! thou little knowest——Swear to me thou wilt speak a word of comfort to my parting soul.

Geo. (*takes his hand*). I swear I will. (*Alarm and shouting.*) But be brief—thou knowest my haste.

Mar. Hear me, then. I was the squire, the beloved and favourite attendant, of Arnolf of Ebersdorf. Arnolf was savage as the mountain bear. He loved the Lady Isabel, but she requited not his passion. She loved thy father; but her sire, old Arnheim, was the friend of Arnolf, and she was forced to marry him. By midnight, in the chapel at Ebersdorf, the ill-omened rites were performed; her resistance, her screams were in vain. These arms detained her at the altar till the nuptial benediction was pronounced. Canst thou forgive me?

Geo. I do forgive thee. Thy obedience to thy savage master has been obliterated by a long train of services to his widow.

Mar. Services! ay, bloody services! for they commenced—do not quit my hand—they commenced with the murder of my master! (GEORGE *quits his hand, and stands aghast in speechless horror.*) Trample on me! pursue me with your dagger! I aided your mother to poison her first husband! I thank Heaven, it is said.

Geo. My mother? Sacred Heaven! Martin, thou ravest—the fever of thy wound has distracted thee.

Mar. No! I am not mad! Would to God I were! Try me! Yonder is the Wolfshill—yonder the old castle of Griefenhaus—and yonder is the hemlock marsh (*in a whisper*) where I gathered the deadly plant that drugged Arnolf's cup of death. (GEORGE *traverses the stage in the utmost agitation, and sometimes stands over* MARTIN *with his hands clasped together.*) Oh, had you seen him when the potion took effect! Had you heard his ravings, and seen the contortions of his ghastly visage!—He died furious and impenitent, as he lived; and went—where I am shortly to go. You do not speak?

Geo. (*with exertion*). Miserable wretch! how can I?

Mar. Can you not forgive me?

Geo. May God pardon thee—I cannot!

Mar. I saved thy life——

Geo. For that, take my curse! (*He snatches up his battle-axe, and rushes out to the side from which the noise is heard.*)

Mar. Hear me! yet more—more horror! (*Attempts to rise, and falls heavily. A loud alarm.*)

Enter WICKERD, *hastily.*

Wic. In the name of God, Martin, lend me thy brand!

Mar. Take it.

Wic. Where is it?

Mar. (*looks wildly at him*). In the chapel at Ebersdorf, or buried in the hemlock marsh.

Wic. The old grumbler is crazy with his wounds. Martin, if thou hast a spark of reason in thee, give me thy sword. The day goes sore against us.

Mar. There it lies. Bury it in the heart of thy master George; thou wilt do him a good office—the office of a faithful servant.

Enter CONRAD.

Con. Away, Wickerd! to horse, and pursue! Baron George has turned the day; he fights more like a fiend than a man: he has unhorsed Roderic, and slain six of his troopers—they are in headlong flight—the hemlock marsh is red with their gore! (MARTIN *gives a deep groan, and faints.*) Away! away! (*They hurry off, as to the pursuit.*)

Enter RODERIC OF MALTINGEN, *without his helmet, his arms disordered and broken, holding the truncheon of a spear in his hand; with him,* BARON WOLFSTEIN.

Rod. A curse on fortune, and a double curse upon George of Aspen! Never, never will I forgive him

my disgrace—overthrown like a rotten trunk before a whirlwind!

Wolf. Be comforted, Count Roderic; it is well we have escaped being prisoners. See how the troopers of Aspen pour along the plain, like the billows of the Rhine! It is good we are shrouded by the thicket.

Rod. Why took he not my life, when he robbed me of my honour and of my love? Why did his spear not pierce my heart, when mine shivered on his arms like a frail bulrush? (*Throws down the broken spear.*) Bear witness, Heaven and earth, I outlive this disgrace only to avenge!

Wolf. Be comforted; the knights of Aspen have not gained a bloodless victory. And see, there lies one of George's followers—(*seeing* MARTIN.)

Rod. His squire Martin; if he be not dead, we will secure him: he is the depositary of the secrets of his master. Arouse thee, trusty follower of the house of Aspen!

Mar. (*reviving*). Leave me not! leave me not, Baron George! my eyes are darkened with agony! I have not yet told all.

Wolf. The old man takes you for his master.

Rod. What wouldst thou tell?

Mar. Oh, I would tell all the temptations by which I was urged to the murder of Ebersdorf!

Rod. Murder!—this is worth marking. Proceed.

Mar. I loved a maiden, daughter of Arnolf's steward; my master seduced her—she became an outcast, and died in misery—I vowed vengeance—and I did avenge her.

Rod. Hadst thou accomplices?

Mar. None, but thy mother.

Rod. The Lady Isabella!

Mar. Ay: she hated her husband: he knew her love to Rudiger, and when she heard that thy father was returned from Palestine, her life was endangered by the transports of his jealousy—thus prepared for evil, the fiend tempted us, and we fell.

Rod. (*breaks into a transport*). Fortune! thou hast repaid me all! Love and vengeance are my own!—Wolfstein, recall our followers! quick, sound thy bugle —(WOLFSTEIN *sounds.*)

Mar. (*stares wildly round*). That was no note of Aspen—Count Roderic of Maltingen—Heaven! what have I said!

Rod. What thou canst not recall.

Mar. Then is my fate decreed! 'Tis as it should be! in this very place was the poison gather'd—'tis retribution!

Enter three or four soldiers of RODERIC.

Rod. Secure this wounded trooper; bind his wounds, and guard him well: carry him to the ruins of Griefenhaus, and conceal him till the troopers of Aspen have retired from the pursuit;—look to him, as you love your lives.

Mar. (*led off by soldiers*). Ministers of vengeance! my hour is come! [*Exeunt.*

Rod. Hope, joy, and triumph, once again are ye mine! Welcome to my heart, long-absent visitants!

One lucky chance has thrown dominion into the scale of the house of Maltingen, and Aspen kicks the beam.

Wolf. I foresee, indeed, dishonour to the family of Aspen, should this wounded squire make good his tale.

Rod. And how thinkest thou this disgrace will fall on them?

Wolf. Surely, by the public punishment of Lady Isabella.

Rod. And is that all?

Wolf. What more?

Rod. Shortsighted that thou art, is not George of Aspen, as well as thou, a member of the holy and invisible circle, over which I preside?

Wolf. Speak lower, for God's sake! these are things not to be mentioned before the sun.

Rod. True: but stands he not bound by the most solemn oath religion can devise, to discover to the tribunal whatever concealed iniquity shall come to his knowledge, be the perpetrator whom he may—ay, were that perpetrator his own father—or mother; and can you doubt that he has heard Martin's confession?

Wolf. True: but, blessed Virgin! do you think he will accuse his own mother before the invisible judges?

Rod. If not, he becomes forsworn, and, by our law, must die. Either way my vengeance is complete—perjured or parricide, I care not; but, as the one or the other shall I crush the haughty George of Aspen.

Wolf. Thy vengeance strikes deep.

Rod. Deep as the wounds I have borne from this

proud family. Rudiger slew my father in battle—George has twice baffled and dishonoured my arms, and Henry has stolen the heart of my beloved: but no longer can Gertrude now remain under the care of the murderous dam of this brood of wolves; far less can she wed the smooth-cheeked boy, when this scene of villainy shall be disclosed. [*Bugle.*

Wolf. Hark! they sound a retreat: let us go deeper into the wood.

Rod. The victors approach! I shall dash their triumph!—Issue the private summons for convoking the members this very evening; I will direct the other measures.

Wolf. What place?

Rod. The old chapel in the ruins of Griefenhaus, as usual. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter GEORGE OF ASPEN, *as from the pursuit.*

Geo. (*comes slowly forward*). How many wretches have sunk under my arm this day, to whom life was sweet, though the wretched bondsmen of Count Roderic! And I—I who sought death beneath every lifted battle-axe, and offered my breast to every arrow—I am cursed with victory and safety. Here I left the wretch——Martin!—Martin!—what, ho! Martin!——Mother of God! he is gone! Should he repeat the dreadful tale to any other——Martin!—He answers not. Perhaps he has crept into the thicket

and died there—were it so, the horrible secret is only mine.

Enter HENRY OF ASPEN, *with* WICKERD, REYNOLD, *and followers.*

Hen. Joy to thee, brother! though, by St Francis, I would not gain another field at the price of seeing thee fight with such reckless desperation. Thy safety is little less than miraculous.

Rey. By 'r Lady, when Baron George struck, I think he must have forgot that his foes were God's creatures. Such furious doings I never saw, and I have been a trooper these forty-two years come St Barnaby——

Geo. Peace! Saw any of you Martin?

Wic. Noble sir, I left him here not long since.

Geo. Alive, or dead?

Wic. Alive, noble sir, but sorely wounded. I think he must be prisoner, for he could not have budged else from hence.

Geo. Heedless slave! Why didst thou leave him?

Hen. Dear brother, Wickerd acted for the best: he came to our assistance and the aid of his companions.

Geo. I tell thee, Henry, Martin's safety was of more importance than the lives of any ten that stand here.

Wic. (*muttering*). Here's much to do about an old crazy trencher-shifter.

Geo. What mutterest thou?

Wic. Only, sir knight, that Martin seemed out of

his senses when I left him, and has perhaps wandered into the marsh, and perished there.

Geo. How—out of his senses? Did he speak to thee?—(*apprehensively.*)

Wic. Yes, noble sir.

Geo. Dear Henry, step for an instant to yon tree—thou wilt see from thence if the foe rally upon the Wolfshill. (HENRY *retires.*) And do you stand back (*to the soldiers*). [*He brings* WICKERD *forward.*

Geo. (*with marked apprehension*). What did Martin say to thee, Wickerd?—tell me, on thy allegiance.

Wic. Mere ravings, sir knight—offered me his sword to kill you.

Geo. Said he aught of killing any one else?

Wic. No: the pain of his wound seemed to have brought on a fever.

Geo. (*clasps his hands together*). I breathe again—I spy comfort. Why could I not see as well as this fellow, that the wounded wretch may have been distracted? Let me at least think so till proof shall shew the truth (*aside*). Wickerd, think not on what I said—the heat of the battle had chafed my blood. Thou hast wished for the Nether farm at Ebersdorf—it shall be thine.

Wic. Thanks, my noble lord.

Re-enter HENRY.

Hen. No—they do not rally—they have had enough of it—but Wickerd and Conrad shall remain, with twenty troopers and a score of crossbowmen, and scour

the woods towards Griefenhaus, to prevent the fugitives from making head. We will, with the rest, to Ebersdorf. What say you, brother?

Geo. Well ordered. Wickerd, look thou search everywhere for Martin: bring him to me dead or alive; leave not a nook of the wood unsought.

Wic. I warrant you, noble sir, I shall find him, could he clew himself up like a dormouse.

Hen. I think he must be prisoner.

Geo. Heaven forefend! Take a trumpet, Eustace (*to an attendant*); ride to the castle of Maltingen, and demand a parley. If Martin is prisoner, offer any ransom: offer ten—twenty—all our prisoners in exchange.

Eus. It shall be done, sir knight.

Hen. Ere we go, sound trumpets—strike up the song of victory.

SONG.

Joy to the victors! the sons of old Aspen!
Joy to the race of the battle and scar!
Glory's proud garland triumphantly grasping;
Generous in peace, and victorious in war.
Honour acquiring,
Valour inspiring,
Bursting, resistless, through foemen they go:
War-axes wielding,
Broken ranks yielding,
Till from the battle proud Roderic retiring,
Yields in wild rout the fair palm to his foe.

Joy to each warrior, true follower of Aspen!
Joy to the heroes that gain'd the bold day!
Health to our wounded, in agony gasping;
Peace to our brethren that fell in the fray!

Boldly this morning,
Roderic's power scorning,
Well for their chieftain their blades did they wield:
Joy blest them dying,
As Maltingen flying,
Low laid his banners, our conquest adorning,
Their death-clouded eyeballs descried on the field!

Now to our home, the proud mansion of Aspen,
Bend we, gay victors, triumphant away;
There each fond damsel, her gallant youth clasping,
Shall wipe from his forehead the stains of the fray.
Listening the prancing
Of horses advancing;
E'en now on the turrets our maidens appear.
Love our hearts warming,
Songs the night charming,
Round goes the grape in the goblet gay dancing;
Love, wine, and song, our blithe evening shall cheer!

Hen. Now spread our banners, and to Ebersdorf in triumph. We carry relief to the anxious, joy to the heart of the aged, brother George. (*Going off.*)

Geo. Or treble misery and death.

[*Apart, and following slowly.*

The music sounds, and the followers of Aspen begin to file across the stage. The curtain falls.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Castle of Ebersdorf.

RUDIGER, ISABELLA, *and* GERTRUDE.

Rud. I prithee, dear wife, be merry. It must be over by this time, and happily, otherwise the bad news had reached us.

Isa. Should we not, then, have heard the tidings of the good?

Rud. Oh! these fly slower by half. Besides, I warrant all of them engaged in the pursuit. Oh! not a page would leave the skirts of the fugitives till they were fairly beaten into their holds; but had the boys lost the day, the stragglers had made for the castle. Go to the window, Gertrude: seest thou any thing?

Ger. I think I see a horseman.

Isa. A single rider? then I fear me much.

Ger. It is only Father Ludovic.

Rud. A plague on thee! didst thou take a fat friar on a mule for a trooper of the house of Aspen?

Ger. But yonder is a great cloud of dust.

Rud. (*eagerly*). Indeed!

Ger. It is only the wine-sledges going to my aunt's convent.

Rud. The devil confound the wine-sledges, and the

mules, and the monks! Come from the window, and torment me no longer, thou seer of strange sights.

Ger. Dear uncle, what can I do to amuse you? Shall I tell you what I dreamed this morning?

Rud. Nonsense: but say on; any thing is better than silence.

Ger. I thought I was in the chapel, and they were burying my aunt Isabella alive. And who, do you think, aunt, were the gravediggers who shovelled in the earth upon you? Even Baron George and old Martin.

Isa. (*appears shocked*). Heaven! what an idea!

Ger. Do but think of my terror—and Minhold the minstrel played all the while to drown your screams.

Rud. And old Father Ludovic danced a saraband, with the steeple of the new convent upon his thick skull by way of mitre. A truce to this nonsense. Give us a song, my love, and leave thy dreams and visions.

Ger. What shall I sing to you?

Rud. Sing to me of war.

Ger. I cannot sing of battle; but I will sing you the Lament of Eleanor of Toro, when her lover was slain in the wars.

Isa. Oh, no laments, Gertrude.

Rud. Then sing a song of mirth.

Isa. Dear husband, is this a time for mirth?

Rud. Is it neither a time to sing of mirth nor of sorrow? Isabella would rather hear Father Ludovic chant the "De profundis."

Ger. Dear uncle, be not angry. At present, I can

only sing the lay of poor Eleanor. It comes to my heart at this moment as if the sorrowful mourner had been my own sister.

SONG.[1]

Sweet shone the sun on the fair lake of Toro,
Weak were the whispers that waved the dark wood,
As a fair maiden, bewilder'd in sorrow,
Sigh'd to the breezes and wept to the flood.—
"Saints, from the mansion of bliss lowly bending,
Virgin, that hear'st the poor suppliant's cry,
Grant my petition, in anguish ascending,
My Frederick restore, or let Eleanor die."

Distant and faint were the sounds of the battle;
With the breezes they rise, with the breezes they fail,
Till the shout, and the groan, and the conflict's dread rattle,
And the chase's wild clamour came loading the gale.
Breathless she gazed through the woodland so dreary,
Slowly approaching, a warrior was seen;
Life's ebbing tide mark'd his footsteps so weary,
Cleft was his helmet, and woe was his mien.

"Save thee, fair maid, for our armies are flying;
Save thee, fair maid, for thy guardian is low;
Cold on yon heath thy bold Frederick is lying,
Fast through the woodland approaches the foe."—

[*The voice of* GERTRUDE *sinks by degrees, till she bursts into tears.*

Rud. How now, Gertrude?

Ger. Alas! may not the fate of poor Eleanor at this moment be mine?

Rud. Never, my girl, never—(*Military music is heard*)—Hark! hark! to the sounds that tell thee so.

[*All rise and run to the window.*

[1] [Compare with "The Maid of Toro," vol. vi. *ante*, p. 368.]

Rud. Joy! joy! they come, and come victorious. (*The chorus of the war-song is heard without.*) Welcome! welcome! once more have my old eyes seen the banners of the house of Maltingen trampled in the dust.—Isabella, broach our oldest casks: wine is sweet after war.

Enter HENRY, *followed by* REYNOLD *and troopers.*

Rud. Joy to thee, my boy: let me press thee to this old heart.

Isa. Bless thee, my son—(*embraces him*)—Oh, how many hours of bitterness are compensated by this embrace! Bless thee, my Henry! where hast thou left thy brother?

Hen. Hard at hand: by this he is crossing the drawbridge. Hast thou no greetings for me, Gertrude? (*Goes to her.*)

Ger. I joy not in battles.

Rud. But she had tears for thy danger.

Hen. Thanks, my gentle Gertrude. See, I have brought back thy scarf from no inglorious field.

Ger. It is bloody!—(*shocked.*)

Rud. Dost start at that, my girl? Were it his own blood as it is that of his foes, thou shouldst glory in it.—Go, Reynold, make good cheer with thy fellows. [*Exit* REYNOLD *and soldiers.*

Enter GEORGE *pensively.*

Geo. (*goes straight to* RUDIGER). Father, thy blessing.

Rud. Thou hast it, boy.

Isa. (*rushes to embrace him—he avoids her*). How? art thou wounded?

Geo. No.

Rud. Thou lookest deadly pale.

Geo. It is nothing.

Isa. Heaven's blessing on my gallant George.

Geo. (*aside*). Dares she bestow a blessing?—Oh, Martin's tale was frenzy!

Isa. Smile upon us for once, my son; darken not thy brow on this day of gladness—few are our moments of joy—should not my sons share in them?

Geo. (*aside*). She has moments of joy—it *was* frenzy then.

Isa. Gertrude, my love, assist me to disarm the knight—(*She loosens and takes off his casque.*)

Ger. There is one, two, three hacks, and none has pierced the steel.

Rud. Let me see. Let me see. A trusty casque!

Ger. Else hadst thou gone.

Isa. I will reward the armourer with its weight in gold.

Geo. (*aside*). She *must* be innocent.

Ger. And Henry's shield is hacked, too. Let me shew it to you, uncle.—(*She carries* HENRY'S *to* RUDIGER.)

Rud. Do, my love—and come hither, Henry, thou shalt tell me how the day went.

[HENRY *and* GERTRUDE *converse apart with* RUDIGER. GEORGE *comes forward.* ISABELLA *comes to him.*

Isa. Surely, George, some evil has befallen thee. Grave thou art ever, but so dreadfully gloomy—

Geo. Evil, indeed.—(*Aside.*) Now for the trial.

Isa. Has your loss been great?

Geo. No!—Yes!—(*Apart.*) I cannot do it.

Isa. Perhaps some friend lost?

Geo. It must be.—*Martin is dead.*—(*He regards her with apprehension, but steadily, as he pronounces these words.*)

Isa. (*starts, then shews a ghastly expression of joy*). Dead!

Geo. (*almost overcome by his feelings*). Guilty! Guilty!—(*apart.*)

Isa. (*without observing his emotion*). Didst thou say dead?

Geo. Did I—no—I only said mortally wounded.

Isa. Wounded? only wounded? Where is he? Let me fly to him.—(*Going*).

Geo. (*sternly*). Hold, lady!—Speak not so loud! —Thou canst not see him!—He is a prisoner.

Isa. A prisoner, and wounded? Fly to his deliverance!—Offer wealth, lands, castles—all our possessions, for his ransom. Never shall I know peace till these walls, or till the grave secures him.

Geo. (*apart*). Guilty! Guilty!

Enter PETER.

Peter. Hugo, squire to the Count of Maltingen, has arrived with a message.

Rud. I will receive him in the hall.

[*Exit, leaning on* GERTRUDE *and* HENRY.

Isa. Go, George—see after Martin.

Geo. (*firmly*). No—I have a task to perform; and though the earth should open and devour me alive—I will accomplish it. But first—but first—Nature, take thy tribute.—(*He falls on his mother's neck, and weeps bitterly.*)

Isa. George! my son! for Heaven's sake what dreadful frenzy!

Geo. (*walks two turns across the stage and composes himself*). Listen, mother—I knew a knight in Hungary, gallant in battle, hospitable and generous in peace. The king gave him his friendship, and the administration of a province; that province was infested by thieves and murderers. You mark me?—

Isa. Most heedfully.

Geo. The knight was sworn—bound by an oath the most dreadful that can be taken by man—to deal among offenders, evenhanded, stern and impartial justice. Was it not a dreadful vow?

Isa. (*with an affectation of composure*). Solemn, doubtless, as the oath of every magistrate.

Geo. And inviolable?

Isa. Surely—inviolable.

Geo. Well! it happened, that when he rode out against the banditti, he made a prisoner. And who, think you, that prisoner was?

Isa. I know not (*with increasing terror*).

Geo. (*trembling, but proceeding rapidly*). His own twin brother, who sucked the same breasts with him, and lay in the bosom of the same mother; his brother whom he loved as his own soul—what should that knight have done unto his brother?

Isa. (*almost speechless*). Alas! what did he do?

Geo. He did (*turning his head from her, and with clasped hands*) what I can never do:—he did his duty.

Isa. My son! my son!—Mercy! Mercy! (*Clings to him.*)

Geo. Is it then true?

Isa. What?

Geo. What Martin said? (ISABELLA *hides her face.*) It is true!

Isa. (*looks up with an air of dignity*). Hear, Framer of the laws of nature! the mother is judged by the child—(*Turns towards him.*) Yes, it is true —true that, fearful of my own life, I secured it by the murder of my tyrant. Mistaken coward! I little knew on what terrors I ran, to avoid one moment's agony.—Thou hast the secret!

Geo. Knowest thou to whom thou hast told it?

Isa. To my son.

Geo. No! No! to an executioner.

Isa. Be it so—go, proclaim my crime, and forget not my punishment. Forget not that the murderess of her husband has dragged out years of hidden remorse, to be brought at last to the scaffold by her own cherished son—thou art silent.

Geo. The language of Nature is no more! How shall I learn another?

Isa. Look upon me, George. Should the executioner be abashed before the criminal—look upon me, my son. From my soul do I forgive thee.

Geo. Forgive me what?

Isa. What thou dost meditate—be vengeance heavy, but let it be secret—add not the death of a father to that of the sinner! Oh! Rudiger! Rudiger! innocent cause of all my guilt and all my woe, how wilt thou tear thy silver locks when thou shalt hear her guilt whom thou hast so often clasped to thy bosom—hear her infamy proclaimed by the son of thy fondest hopes —(*weeps.*)

Geo. (*struggling for breath*). Nature will have utterance: mother, dearest mother, I will save you or perish! (*throws himself into her arms.*) Thus fall my vows.

Isa. Man thyself! I ask not safety from thee. Never shall it be said, that Isabella of Aspen turned her son from the path of duty, though his footsteps must pass over her mangled corpse. Man thyself.

Geo. No! No! The ties of Nature were knit by God himself. Cursed be the stoic pride that would rend them asunder, and call it virtue!

Isa. My son! My son!—How shall I behold thee hereafter?

[*Three knocks are heard upon the door of the apartment.*

Geo. Hark! One—two—three. Roderic, thou art speedy! (*Apart.*)

Isa. (*opens the door*). A parchment stuck to the door with a poniard! (*Opens it.*) Heaven and earth! —a summons from the invisible judges!—(*Drops the parchment.*)

Geo. (*reads with emotion*). "Isabella of Aspen, accused of murder by poison, we conjure thee, by the cord and by the steel, to appear this night before the avengers of blood, who judge in secret and avenge in secret, like the Deity. As thou art innocent or guilty, so be thy deliverance."—Martin, Martin, thou hast played false!

Isa. Alas! whither shall I fly?

Geo. Thou canst not fly; instant death would follow the attempt; a hundred thousand arms would be raised against thy life; every morsel thou didst taste, every drop which thou didst drink, the very breeze of heaven that fanned thee, would come loaded with destruction. One chance of safety is open:—obey the summons.

Isa. And perish.—Yet why should I still fear death? Be it so.

Geo. No—I have sworn to save you. I will not do the work by halves. Does any one save Martin know of the dreadful deed?

Isa. None.

Geo. Then go—assert your innocence, and leave the rest to me.

Isa. Wretch that I am! How can I support the task you would impose?

Geo. Think on my father. Live for him: he will need all the comfort thou canst bestow. Let the thought that his destruction is involved in thine, carry thee through the dreadful trial.

Isa. Be it so.—For Rudiger I have lived: for him I will continue to bear the burden of existence: but the instant that my guilt comes to his knowledge shall be the last of my life. Ere I would bear from him one glance of hatred or of scorn, this dagger should drink my blood. (*Puts the poniard into her bosom.*)

Geo. Fear not. He can never know. No evidence shall appear against you.

Isa. How shall I obey the summons, and where find the terrible judgment-seat?

Geo. Leave that to the judges. Resolve but to obey, and a conductor will be found. Go to the chapel; there pray for your sins and for mine. (*He leads her out, and returns.*)—Sins, indeed! I break a dreadful vow, but I save the life of a parent; and the penance I will do for my perjury shall appal even the judges of blood.

Enter REYNOLD.

Rey. Sir knight, the messenger of Count Roderic desires to speak with you.

Geo. Admit him.

Enter HUGO.

Hugo. Count Roderic of Maltingen greets you. He

says he will this night hear the bat flutter and the owlet scream; and he bids me ask if thou also wilt listen to the music.

Geo. I understand him. I will be there.

Hugo. And the count says to you, that he will not ransom your wounded squire, though you would downweigh his best horse with gold. But you may send him a confessor, for the count says he will need one.

Geo. Is he so near death?

Hugo. Not as it seems to me. He is weak through loss of blood; but since his wound was dressed he can both stand and walk. Our count has a notable balsam, which has recruited him much.

Geo. Enough—I will send a priest.—(*Exit* HUGO.) I fathom his plot. He would add another witness to the tale of Martin's guilt. But no priest shall approach him. Reynold, thinkest thou not we could send one of the troopers, disguised as a monk, to aid Martin in making his escape?

Rey. Noble sir, the followers of your house are so well known to those of Maltingen, that I fear it is impossible.

Geo. Knowest thou of no stranger who might be employed? His reward shall exceed even his hopes.

Rey. So please you—I think the minstrel could well execute such a commission: he is shrewd and cunning, and can write and read like a priest.

Geo. Call him.—(*Exit* REYNOLD.) If this fails, I must employ open force. Were Martin removed, no tongue can assert the bloody truth.

Enter MINSTREL.

Geo. Come hither, Minhold. Hast thou courage to undertake a dangerous enterprise?

Ber. My life, sir knight, has been one scene of danger and of dread. I have forgotten how to fear.

Geo. Thy speech is above thy seeming.—Who art thou?

Ber. An unfortunate knight, obliged to shroud myself under this disguise.

Geo. What is the cause of thy misfortunes?

Ber. I slew, at a tournament, a prince, and was laid under the ban of the empire.

Geo. I have interest with the emperor. Swear to perform what task I shall impose on thee, and I will procure the recall of the ban.

Ber. I swear.

Geo. Then take the disguise of a monk, and go with the follower of Count Roderic, as if to confess my wounded squire Martin. Give him thy dress, and remain in prison in his stead. Thy captivity shall be short, and I pledge my knightly word I will labour to execute my promise, when thou shalt have leisure to unfold thy history.

Ber. I will do as you direct. Is the life of your squire in danger?

Geo. It is, unless thou canst accomplish his release.

Ber. I will essay it. [*Exit.*

Geo. Such are the mean expedients to which George of Aspen must now resort. No longer can I debate with Roderic in the field. The depraved—the perjured

knight must contend with him only in the arts of dissimulation and treachery. Oh, mother! mother! the most bitter consequence of thy crime has been the birth of thy first-born! But I must warn my brother of the impending storm. Poor Henry, how little can thy gay temper anticipate evil! What, ho there! (*Enter an Attendant.*) Where is Baron Henry?

Att. Noble sir, he rode forth, after a slight refreshment, to visit the party in the field.

Geo. Saddle my steed! I will follow him.

Att. So please you, your noble father has twice demanded your presence at the banquet.

Geo. It matters not—say that I have ridden forth to the Wolfshill. Where is thy lady?

Att. In the chapel, sir knight.

Geo. 'Tis well—saddle my bay horse—(*apart*) for the last time. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

The wood of Griefenhaus, with the ruins of the castle. A nearer view of the castle than in Act Second, but still at some distance.

Enter RODERIC, WOLFSTEIN, *and Soldiers, as from a reconnoitring party.*

Wolf. They mean to improve their success, and will

push their advantage far. We must retreat betimes, Count Roderic.

Rod. We are safe here for the present. They make no immediate motion of advance. I fancy neither George nor Henry are with their party in the wood.

Enter HUGO.

Hugo. Noble sir, how shall I tell what has happened?

Rod. What?

Hugo. Martin has escaped.

Rod. Villain! thy life shall pay it! (*Strikes at* HUGO—*is held by* WOLFSTEIN.)

Wolf. Hold, hold, Count Roderic! Hugo may be blameless.

Rod. Reckless slave! how came he to escape?

Hugo. Under the disguise of a monk's habit, whom by your orders we brought to confess him.

Rod. Has he been long gone?

Hugo. An hour and more since he passed our sentinels, disguised as the chaplain of Aspen: but he walked so slowly and feebly, I think he cannot yet have reached the posts of the enemy.

Rod. Where is the treacherous priest?

Hugo. He waits his doom not far from hence.

[*Exit* HUGO.

Rod. Drag him hither. The miscreant that snatched the morsel of vengeance from the lion of Maltingen, shall expire under torture.

Re-enter HUGO *with* BERTRAM *and Attendants.*

Rod. Villain! what tempted thee, under the garb of a minister of religion, to steal a criminal from the hand of justice?

Ber. I am no villain, Count Roderic; and I only aided the escape of one wounded wretch whom thou didst mean to kill basely.

Rod. Liar and slave! thou hast assisted a murderer, upon whom justice had sacred claims.

Ber. I warn thee again, count, that I am neither liar nor slave. Shortly I hope to tell thee I am once more thy equal.

Rod. Thou! Thou!——

Ber. Yes! the name of Bertram of Ebersdorf was once not unknown to thee.

Rod. (*astonished*). Thou Bertram! the brother of Arnolf of Ebersdorf, first husband of the Baroness Isabella of Aspen?

Ber. The same.

Rod. Who, in a quarrel at a tournament, many years since, slew a blood-relation of the emperor, and was laid under the ban?

Ber. The same.

Rod. And who has now, in the disguise of a priest, aided the escape of Martin, squire to George of Aspen?

Ber. The same—the same.

Rod. Then, by the holy cross of Cologne, thou hast set at liberty the murderer of thy brother Arnolf!

Ber. How! What! I understand thee not!

Rod. Miserable plotter!—Martin, by his own confession, as Wolfstein heard, avowed having aided Isabella in the murder of her husband. I had laid such a plan of vengeance as should have made all Germany shudder. And thou hast counteracted it—thou, the brother of the murdered Arnolf!

Ber. Can this be so, Wolfstein?

Wolf. I heard Martin confess the murder.

Ber. Then am I indeed unfortunate!

Rod. What, in the name of evil, brought thee here?

Ber. I am the last of my race. When I was outlawed, as thou knowest, the lands of Ebersdorf, my rightful inheritance, were declared forfeited, and the Emperor bestowed them upon Rudiger when he married Isabella. I attempted to defend my domain, but Rudiger—Hell thank him for it—enforced the ban against me at the head of his vassals, and I was constrained to fly. Since then I have warred against the Saracens in Spain and Palestine.

Rod. But why didst thou return to a land where death attends thy being discovered?

Ber. Impatience urged me to see once more the land of my nativity, and the towers of Ebersdorf. I came there yesterday, under the name of the minstrel Minhold.

Rod. And what prevailed on thee to undertake to deliver Martin?

Ber. George, though I told not my name, engaged to procure the recall of the ban; besides, he told me Martin's life was in danger, and I accounted the old

villain to be the last remaining follower of our house. But, as God shall judge me, the tale of horror thou hast mentioned I could not have even suspected. Report ran, that my brother died of the plague.

Wolf. Raised for the purpose, doubtless, of preventing attendance upon his sick-bed, and an inspection of his body.

Ber. My vengeance shall be dreadful as its cause! The usurpers of my inheritance, the robbers of my honour, the murderers of my brother, shall be cut off, root and branch!

Rod. Thou art, then, welcome here; especially if thou art still a true brother to our invisible order.

Ber. I am.

Rod. There is a meeting this night on the business of thy brother's death. Some are now come. I must despatch them in pursuit of Martin.

Enter HUGO.

Hugo. The foes advance, sir knight.

Rod. Back! back to the ruins! Come with us, Bertram; on the road thou shalt hear the dreadful history. [*Exeunt.*

From the opposite side enter GEORGE, HENRY, WICKERD, CONRAD, *and Soldiers.*

Geo. No news of Martin yet?

Wic. None, sir knight.

Geo. Nor of the minstrel?

Wic. None.

Geo. Then he has betrayed me, or is prisoner—misery either way. Begone, and search the wood, Wickerd. [*Exeunt* WICKERD *and followers.*

Hen. Still this dreadful gloom on thy brow, brother?

Geo. Ay! what else?

Hen. Once thou thoughtest me worthy of thy friendship.

Geo. Henry, thou art young—

Hen. Shall I therefore betray thy confidence?

Geo. No! but thou art gentle and well-natured. Thy mind cannot even support the burden which mine must bear, far less wilt thou approve the means I shall use to throw it off.

Hen. Try me.

Geo. I may not.

Hen. Then thou dost no longer love me.

Geo. I love thee, and because I love thee, I will not involve thee in my distress.

Hen. I will bear it with thee.

Geo. Shouldst thou share it, it would be doubled to me!

Hen. Fear not, I will find a remedy.

Geo. It would cost thee peace of mind, here, and hereafter.

Hen. I take the risk.

Geo. It may not be, Henry. Thou wouldst become the confidant of crimes past—the accomplice of others to come.

Hen. Shall I guess?

Geo. I charge thee, no!

Hen. I must. Thou art one of the secret judges.

Geo. Unhappy boy! what hast thou said?

Hen. Is it not so?

Geo. Dost thou know what the discovery has cost thee?

Hen. I care not.

Geo. He who discovers any part of our mystery must himself become one of our number.

Hen. How so?

Geo. If he does not consent, his secrecy will be speedily insured by his death. To that we are sworn —take thy choice!

Hen. Well, are you not banded in secret to punish those offenders whom the sword of justice cannot reach, or who are shielded from its stroke by the buckler of power?

Geo. Such is indeed the purpose of our fraternity; but the end is pursued through paths dark, intricate, and slippery with blood. Who is he that shall tread them with safety? Accursed be the hour in which I entered the labyrinth, and doubly accursed that, in which thou too must lose the cheerful sunshine of a soul without a mystery!

Hen. Yet for thy sake will I be a member.

Geo. Henry, thou didst rise this morning a free man. No one could say to thee, "Why dost thou so?" Thou layest thee down to-night the veriest slave that ever tugged at an oar—the slave of men whose actions will appear to thee savage and incomprehensible, and

whom thou must aid against the world, upon peril of thy throat.

Hen. Be it so. I will share your lot.

Geo. Alas, Henry! Heaven forbid! But since thou hast by a hasty word fettered thyself, I will avail myself of thy bondage. Mount thy fleetest steed, and hie thee this very night to the Duke of Bavaria. He is chief and paramount of our chapter. Shew him this signet and this letter; tell him that matters will be this night discussed concerning the house of Aspen. Bid him speed him to the assembly, for he well knows the president is our deadly foe. He will admit thee a member of our holy body.

Hen. Who is the foe whom you dread?

Geo. Young man, the first duty thou must learn is implicit and blind obedience.

Hen. Well! I shall soon return and see thee again.

Geo. Return, indeed, thou wilt; but for the rest—well! that matters not.

Hen. I go: thou wilt set a watch here?

Geo. I will. (HENRY *going.*) Return, my dear Henry; let me embrace thee, shouldst thou not see me again.

Hen. Heaven! what mean you?

Geo. Nothing. The life of mortals is precarious; and, should we not meet again, take my blessing and this embrace—and this—(*embraces him warmly.*) And now haste to the duke. (*Exit* HENRY.) Poor youth, thou little knowest what thou hast undertaken. But

if Martin has escaped, and if the duke arrives, they will not dare to proceed without proof.

Re-enter WICKERD *and followers.*

Wic. We have made a follower of Maltingen prisoner, Baron George, who reports that Martin has escaped.

Geo. Joy! joy! such joy as I can now feel! Set him free for the good news—and, Wickerd, keep a good watch in this spot all night. Send out scouts to find Martin, lest he should not be able to reach Ebersdorf.

Wic. I shall, noble sir.

[*The kettle-drums and trumpets flourish as for setting the watch: the scene closes.*

SCENE II.

The chapel at Ebersdorf, an ancient Gothic building.

ISABELLA *is discovered rising from before the altar, on which burn two tapers.*

Isa. I cannot pray. Terror and guilt have stifled devotion. The heart must be at ease—the hands must be pure when they are lifted to Heaven. Midnight is the hour of summons: it is now near. How can I pray, when I go resolved to deny a crime which every drop of my blood could not wash away! And my son! Oh! he will fall the victim of my crime! Arnolf! Arnolf! thou art dreadfully avenged!

(*Tap at the door.*) The footstep of my dreadful guide. (*Tap again.*) My courage is 'no more. (*Enter* GERTRUDE *by the door.*) Gertrude! is it only thou? (*embraces her.*)

Ger. Dear aunt, leave this awful place; it chills my very blood. My uncle sent me to call you to the hall.

Isa. Who is in the hall?

Ger. Only Reynold and the family, with whom my uncle is making merry.

Isa. Sawest thou no strange faces?

Ger. No; none but friends.

Isa. Art thou sure of that? Is George there?

Ger. No, nor Henry; both have ridden out. I think they might have staid one day at least. But come, aunt, I hate this place; it reminds me of my dream. See, yonder was the spot where methought they were burying you alive, below yon monument (*pointing*).

Isa. (*starting*). The monument of my first husband. Leave me, leave me, Gertrude. I follow in a moment. (*Exit* GERTRUDE.) Ay, there he lies! forgetful alike of his crimes and injuries! Insensible, as if this chapel had never rung with my shrieks, or the castle resounded to his parting groans! When shall I sleep so soundly? (*As she gazes on the monument, a figure muffled in black appears from behind it.*) Merciful God! is it a vision, such as has haunted my couch? (*It approaches: she goes on with mingled terror and resolution.*) Ghastly phantom, art thou the restless spirit of one who died in agony, or art thou the mysterious being that must guide me to the presence

of the avengers of blood? (*Figure bends its head and beckons.*)—To-morrow! To-morrow! I cannot follow thee now! (*Figure shews a dagger from beneath its cloak.*) Compulsion! I understand thee: I will follow. (*She follows the figure a little way; he turns, and wraps a black veil round her head, and takes her hand: then both exeunt behind the monument.*)

SCENE III.

The Wood of Griefenhaus.—A watch-fire, round which sit WICKERD, CONRAD, *and others, in their watch-cloaks.*

Wic. The night is bitter cold.

Con. Ay, but thou hast lined thy doublet well with old Rhenish.

Wic. True; and I'll give ye warrant for it. (*Sings.*)

(RHEIN-WEIN LEID.)

What makes the troopers' frozen courage muster?
The grapes of juice divine.
Upon the Rhine, upon the Rhine they cluster:
Oh, blessed be the Rhine!

Let fringe and furs, and many a rabbit skin, sirs,
Bedeck your Saracen;
He'll freeze without what warms our hearts within, sirs,
When the night-frost crusts the fen.

But on the Rhine, but on the Rhine they cluster,
The grapes of juice divine,
That make our troopers' frozen courage muster:
Oh, blessed be the Rhine!

Con. Well sung, Wickerd; thou wert ever a jovial soul.

Enter a trooper or two more.

Wic. Hast thou made the rounds, Frank?

Frank. Yes, up to the hemlock marsh. It is a stormy night; the moon shone on the Wolfshill, and on the dead bodies with which to-day's work has covered it. We heard the spirit of the house of Maltingen wailing over the slaughter of its adherents: I durst go no farther.

Wic. Hen-hearted rascal! The spirit of some old raven, who was picking their bones.

Con. Nay, Wickerd; the churchmen say there are such things.

Frank. Ay; and Father Ludovic told us last sermon, how the devil twisted the neck of ten farmers at Kletterbach, who refused to pay Peter's pence.

Wic. Yes, some church-devil, no doubt.

Frank. Nay, old Reynold says, that in passing, by midnight, near the old chapel at our castle, he saw it all lighted up, and heard a chorus of voices sing the funeral-service.

Another Soldier. Father Ludovic heard the same.

Wic. Hear me, ye hare-livered boys! Can you look death in the face in battle, and dread such nursery bugbears? Old Reynold saw his vision in the strength of the grape. As for the chaplain, far be it from me to name the spirit which visits him; but I know what I know, when I found him confessing Bertrand's pretty Agnes in the chestnut grove.

Con. But, Wickerd, though I have often heard of strange tales which I could not credit, yet there is one in our family so well attested, that I almost believe it. Shall I tell it you?

All Soldiers. Do! do tell it, gentle Conrad.

Wic. And I will take t'other sup of Rhenish to fence against the horrors of the tale.

Con. It is about my own uncle and godfather, Albert of Horsheim.

Wic. I have seen him—he was a gallant warrior.

Con. Well! He was long absent in the Bohemian wars. In an expedition he was benighted, and came to a lone house on the edge of a forest: he and his followers knocked repeatedly for entrance in vain. They forced the door, but found no inhabitants.

Frank. And they made good their quarters?

Con. They did: and Albert retired to rest in an upper chamber. Opposite to the bed on which he threw himself was a large mirror. At midnight he was awaked by deep groans: he cast his eyes upon the mirror, and saw——

Frank. Sacred Heaven! Heard you nothing?

Wic. Ay, the wind among the withered leaves. Go on, Conrad. Your uncle was a wise man.

Con. That's more than gray hairs can make other folks.

Wic. Ha! stripling, art thou so malapert? Though thou art Lord Henry's page, I shall teach thee who commands this party.

All Soldiers. Peace, peace, good Wickerd: let Conrad proceed.

Con. Where was I?

Frank. About the mirror.

Con. True. My uncle beheld in the mirror the reflection of a human face, distorted and covered with blood. A voice pronounced articulately, "It is yet time." As the words were spoken, my uncle discerned in the ghastly visage the features of his own father.

Soldier. Hush! By St Francis I heard a groan. (*They start up all but* WICKERD.)

Wic. The croaking of a frog, who has caught cold in this bitter night, and sings rather more hoarsely than usual.

Frank. Wickerd, thou art surely no Christian. (*They sit down, and close round the fire.*)

Con. Well—my uncle called up his attendants, and they searched every nook of the chamber, but found nothing. So they covered the mirror with a cloth, and Albert was left alone: but hardly had he closed his eyes when the same voice proclaimed, "It is now too late;" the covering was drawn aside, and he saw the figure——

Frank. Merciful Virgin! It comes. (*All rise.*)

Wic. Where? what?

Con. See yon figure coming from the thicket!

Enter MARTIN, *in the monk's dress, much disordered: his face is very pale, and his steps slow.*

Wic. (*levelling his pike*). Man or devil, which thou

wilt, thou shalt feel cold iron, if thou budgest a foot nearer. (MARTIN *stops.*) Who art thou? What dost thou seek?

Mar. To warm myself at your fire. It is deadly cold.

Wic. See there, ye cravens, your apparition is a poor benighted monk: sit down, father. (*They place* MARTIN *by the fire.*) By heaven, it is Martin—our Martin! Martin, how fares it with thee? We have sought thee this whole night.

Mar. So have many others (*vacantly*).

Con. Yes, thy master.

Mar. Did you see him too?

Con. Whom? Baron George?

Mar. No! my first master, Arnolf of Ebersdorf.

Wic. He raves.

Mar. He passed me but now in the wood, mounted upon his old black steed; its nostrils breathed smoke and flame; neither tree nor rock stopped him. He said, "Martin, thou wilt return this night to my service!"

Wic. Wrap thy cloak around him, Francis; he is distracted with cold and pain. Dost thou not recollect me, old friend?

Mar. Yes, you are the butler at Ebersdorf: you have the charge of the large gilded cup, embossed with the figures of the twelve apostles. It was the favourite goblet of my old master.

Con. By our Lady, Martin, thou must be distracted indeed, to think our master would intrust Wickerd with the care of the cellar.

Mar. I know a face so like the apostate Judas on that cup. I have seen the likeness when I gazed on a mirror.

Wic. Try to go to sleep, dear Martin; it will relieve thy brain. (*Footsteps are heard in the wood.*) To your arms. (*They take their arms.*)

Enter two Members of the Invisible Tribunal, muffled in their cloaks.

Con. Stand! Who are ye?

1 *Mem.* Travellers benighted in the wood.

Wic. Are ye friends to Aspen or Maltingen?

1 *Mem.* We enter not into their quarrel: we are friends to the right.

Wic. Then are ye friends to us, and welcome to pass the night by our fire.

2 *Mem.* Thanks. (*They approach the fire, and regard* MARTIN *very earnestly.*)

Con. Hear ye any news abroad?

2 *Mem.* None; but that oppression and villainy are rife and rank as ever.

Wic. The old complaint.

1 *Mem.* No! never did former age equal this in wickedness; and yet, as if the daily commission of enormities were not enough to blot the sun, every hour discovers crimes which have lain concealed for years.

Con. Pity the Holy Tribunal should slumber in its office.

2 *Mem.* Young man, it slumbers not. When criminals are ripe for its vengeance, it falls like the bolt of Heaven.

Mar. (*attempting to rise*). Let me be gone.

Con. (*detaining him*). Whither now, Martin?

Mar. To mass.

1 *Mem.* Even now, we heard a tale of a villain, who, ungrateful as the frozen adder, stung the bosom that had warmed him into life.

Mar. Conrad, bear me off; I would be away from these men.

Con. Be at ease, and strive to sleep.

Mar. Too well I know—I shall never sleep again.

2 *Mem.* The wretch of whom we speak became, from revenge and lust of gain, the murderer of the master whose bread he did eat.

Wic. Out upon the monster!

1 *Mem.* For nearly thirty years was he permitted to cumber the ground. The miscreant thought his crime was concealed; but the earth which groaned under his footsteps—the winds which passed over his unhallowed head—the stream which he polluted by his lips—the fire at which he warmed his blood-stained hands—every element bore witness to his guilt.

Mar. Conrad, good youth—lead me from hence, and I will shew thee where, thirty years since, I deposited a mighty bribe. [*Rises.*

Con. Be patient, good Martin.

Wic. And where was the miscreant seized?

[*The two Members suddenly lay hands on* MARTIN, *and draw their daggers; the Soldiers spring to their arms.*

1 *Mem.* On this very spot.

Wic. Traitors, unloose your hold!

1 *Mem.* In the name of the Invisible Judges, I charge ye, impede us not in our duty.

[*All sink their weapons, and stand motionless.*

Mar. Help! help!

1 *Mem.* Help him with your prayers.

[*He is dragged off. The scene shuts.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

The subterranean chapel of the Castle of Griefenhaus. It seems deserted, and in decay. There are four entrances, each defended by an iron portal. At each door stands a warder clothed in black, and masked, armed with a naked sword. During the whole scene they remain motionless on their posts. In the centre of the chapel is the ruinous altar, half sunk in the ground, on which lie a large book, a dagger, and a coil of ropes, beside two lighted tapers. Antique stone benches of different heights around the chapel. In the back scene is seen a dilapidated entrance into the sacristy, which is quite dark.

Various Members of the Invisible Tribunal enter by the four different doors of the chapel. Each whispers

something as he passes the Warder, which is answered by an inclination of the head. The costume of the Members is a long black robe, capable of muffling the face: some wear it in this manner; others have their faces uncovered, unless on the entrance of a stranger: they place themselves in profound silence upon the stone benches.

Enter COUNT RODERIC, *dressed in a scarlet cloak of the same form with those of the other Members. He takes his place on the most elevated bench.*

Rod. Warders, secure the doors! (*The doors are barred with great care.*) Herald, do thy duty!

[*Members all rise—Herald stands by the altar.*

Her. Members of the Invisible Tribunal, who judge in secret, and avenge in secret, like the Deity, are your hearts free from malice, and your hands from blood-guiltiness?

[*All the Members incline their heads.*

Rod. God pardon our sins of ignorance, and preserve us from those of presumption.

[*Again the Members solemnly incline their heads.*

Her. To the east, and to the west, and to the north, and to the south, I raise my voice; wherever there is treason, wherever there is blood-guiltiness, wherever there is sacrilege, sorcery, robbery, or perjury, there let this curse alight, and pierce the marrow and the bone. Raise, then, your voices, and say with me, wo! wo, unto offenders!

All. Wo! wo! [*Members sit down.*

Her. He who knoweth of an unpunished crime, let him stand forth as bound by his oath when his hand was laid upon the dagger and upon the cord, and call to the assembly for vengeance!

Member (*rises, his face covered*). Vengeance! vengeance! vengeance!

Rod. Upon whom dost thou invoke vengeance?

Accuser. Upon a brother of this order, who is forsworn and perjured to its laws.

Rod. Relate his crime.

Accuser. This perjured brother was sworn, upon the steel and upon the cord, to denounce malefactors to the judgment-seat, from the four quarters of heaven, though it were the spouse of his heart, or the son whom he loved as the apple of his eye: yet did he conceal the guilt of one who was dear unto him; he folded up the crime from the knowledge of the tribunal; he removed the evidence of guilt, and withdrew the criminal from justice. What does his perjury deserve?

Rod. Accuser, come before the altar; lay thy hand upon the dagger and the cord, and swear to the truth of thy accusation.

Accuser (*his hand on the altar*). I swear!

Rod. Wilt thou take upon thyself the penalty of perjury, should it be found false?

Accuser. I will.

Rod. Brethren, what is your sentence?

[*The Members confer a moment in whispers—a silence.*

Eldest Mem. Our voice is, that the perjured brother merits death.

Rod. Accuser, thou hast heard the voice of the assembly; name the criminal.

Accuser. George, Baron of Aspen.

[*A murmur in the assembly.*

A Member (*suddenly rising*). I am ready, according to our holy laws, to swear, by the steel and the cord, that George of Aspen merits not this accusation, and that it is a foul calumny.

Accuser. Rash man! gagest thou an oath so lightly?

Member. I gage it not lightly. I proffer it in the cause of innocence and virtue.

Accuser. What if George of Aspen should not himself deny the charge?

Member. Then would I never trust man again.

Accuser. Hear him, then, bear witness against himself (*throws back his mantle.*)

Rod. Baron George of Aspen!

Geo. The same—prepared to do penance for the crime of which he stands self-accused.

Rod. Still, canst thou disclose the name of the criminal whom thou hast rescued from justice, on that condition alone, thy brethren may save thy life.

Geo. Thinkest thou I would betray for the safety of my life, a secret I have preserved at the breach of my word?—No! I have weighed the value of my obligation—I will not discharge it—but most willingly will I pay the penalty!

Rod. Retire, George of Aspen, till the assembly pronounce judgment.

Geo. Welcome be your sentence—I am weary of your yoke of iron. A light beams on my soul. Wo to those who seek justice in the dark haunts of mystery and of cruelty! She dwells in the broad blaze of the sun, and Mercy is ever by her side. Wo to those who would advance the general weal by trampling upon the social affections! they aspire to be more than men—they shall become worse than tigers. I go: better for me your altars should be stained with my blood, than my soul blackened with your crimes.

[*Exit* GEORGE, *by the ruinous door in the back scene, into the sacristy.*

Rod. Brethren, sworn upon the steel and upon the cord, to judge and to avenge in secret, without favour and without pity, what is your judgment upon George of Aspen, self-accused of perjury, and resistance to the laws of our fraternity.

[*Long and earnest murmurs in the assembly.*

Rod. Speak your doom.

Eldest Mem. George of Aspen has declared himself perjured;—the penalty of perjury is death!

Rod. Father of the secret judges—Eldest among those who avenge in secret—take to thee the steel and the cord;—let the guilty no longer cumber the land.

Eldest Mem. I am four score and eight years old. My eyes are dim, and my hand is feeble; soon shall I be called before the throne of my Creator;—How

shall I stand there, stained with the blood of such a man?

Rod. How wilt thou stand before that throne, loaded with the guilt of a broken oath? The blood of the criminal be upon us and ours!

Eldest Mem. So be it, in the name of God!

[*He takes the dagger from the altar, goes slowly towards the back scene, and reluctantly enters the sacristy.*

Eldest Judge (*from behind the scene*). Dost thou forgive me?

Geo. (*behind*). I do! (*He is heard to fall heavily.*)

[*Re-enter the old judge from the sacristy. He lays on the altar the bloody dagger.*

Rod. Hast thou done thy duty?

Eldest Mem. I have. (*He faints.*)

Rod. He swoons. Remove him.

[*He is assisted off the stage. During this four members enter the sacristy, and bring out a bier covered with a pall, which they place on the steps of the altar. A deep silence.*

Rod. Judges of evil, dooming in secret, and avenging in secret, like the Deity: God keep your thoughts from evil, and your hands from guilt.

Ber. I raise my voice in this assembly, and cry, Vengeance! vengeance! vengeance!

Rod. Enough has this night been done—(*he rises and brings* BERTRAM *forward.*) Think what thou doest—George has fallen—it were murder to slay both mother and son.

Ber. George of Aspen was thy victim—a sacrifice to thy hatred and envy. I claim mine, sacred to justice and to my murdered brother. Resume thy place!—thou canst not stop the rock thou hast put in motion.

Rod. (*resumes his seat*). Upon whom callest thou for vengeance?

Ber. Upon Isabella of Aspen.

Rod. She has been summoned.

Herald. Isabella of Aspen, accused of murder by poison, I charge thee to appear, and stand upon thy defence.

[*Three knocks are heard at one of the doors—it is opened by the warder.*

Enter ISABELLA, *the veil still wrapped around her head, led by her conductor. All the members muffle their faces.*

Rod. Uncover her eyes.

[*The veil is removed.* ISABELLA *looks wildly round.*

Rod. Knowest thou, lady, where thou art?

Isa. I guess.

Rod. Say thy guess.

Isa. Before the Avengers of blood.

Rod. Knowest thou why thou art called to their presence?

Isa. No.

Rod. Speak, accuser.

Ber. I impeach thee, Isabella of Aspen, before this

awful assembly, of having murdered, privily and by poison, Arnolf of Ebersdorf, thy first husband.

Rod. Canst thou swear to the accusation?

Ber. (*his hand on the altar*). I lay my hand on the steel and the cord, and swear.

Rod. Isabella of Aspen, thou hast heard thy accusation. What canst thou answer?

Isa. That the oath of an accuser is no proof of guilt!

Rod. Hast thou more to say?

Isa. I have.

Rod. Speak on.

Isa. Judges invisible to the sun, and seen only by the stars of midnight! I stand before you, accused of an enormous, daring, and premeditated crime. I was married to Arnolf when I was only eighteen years old. Arnolf was wary and jealous; ever suspecting me without a cause, unless it was because he had injured me. How then should I plan and perpetrate such a deed? The lamb turns not against the wolf, though a prisoner in his den.

Rod. Have you finished?

Isa. A moment. Years after years have elapsed without a whisper of this foul suspicion. Arnolf left a brother! though common fame had been silent, natural affection would have been heard against me—why spoke he not my accusation? Or has my conduct justified this horrible charge? No! awful judges, I may answer, I have founded cloisters, I have endowed hospitals. The goods that Heaven bestowed on me

I have not held back from the needy. I appeal to you, judges of evil, can these proofs of innocence be down-weighed by the assertion of an unknown and disguised, perchance a malignant accuser?

Ber. No longer will I wear that disguise (*throws back his mantle*). Dost thou know me now?

Isa. Yes; I know thee for a wandering minstrel, relieved by the charity of my husband.

Ber. No, traitress! know me for Bertram of Ebersdorf, brother to him thou didst murder. Call her accomplice, Martin. Ha! turn'st thou pale?

Isa. May I have some water?—(*Apart.*) Sacred Heaven! his vindictive look is so like—

[*Water is brought.*

A Member. Martin died in the hands of our brethren.

Rod. Dost thou know the accuser, lady?

Isa. (*reassuming fortitude*). Let not the sinking of nature under this dreadful trial be imputed to the consciousness of guilt. I do know the accuser—know him to be outlawed for homicide, and under the ban of the empire: his testimony cannot be received.

Eldest Judge. She says truly.

Ber. (*to* RODERIC). Then I call upon thee and William of Wolfstein to bear witness to what you know.

Rod. Wolfstein is not in the assembly, and my place prevents me from being a witness.

Ber. Then I will call another: meanwhile let the accused be removed.

Rod. Retire, lady. [ISABELLA *is led to the sacristy.*

Isa. (*in going off*). The ground is slippery—Heavens! it is floated with blood!

[*Exit into the sacristy.*

Rod. (*apart to* BERTRAM). Whom dost thou mean to call? [BERTRAM *whispers.*

Rod. This goes beyond me. (*After a moment's thought.*) But be it so. Maltingen shall behold Aspen humbled in the dust. (*Aloud.*) Brethren, the accuser calls for a witness who remains without: admit him. [*All muffle their faces.*

Enter RUDIGER, *his eyes bound or covered, leaning upon two members; they place a stool for him, and unbind his eyes.*

Rod. Knowest thou where thou art, and before whom?

Rud. I know not, and I care not. Two strangers summoned me from my castle to assist, they said, at a great act of justice. I ascended the litter they brought, and I am here.

Rod. It regards the punishment of perjury and the discovery of murder. Art thou willing to assist us?

Rud. Most willing, as is my duty.

Rod. What if the crime regard thy friend?

Rud. I will hold him no longer so.

Rod. What if thine own blood?

Rud. I would let it out with my poniard.

Rod. Then canst thou not blame us for this deed of

justice. Remove the pall. (*The pall is lifted, beneath which is discovered the body of* GEORGE, *pale and bloody.* RUDIGER *staggers towards it.*)

Rud. My George! my George! Not slain manly in battle, but murdered by legal assassins. Much, much may I mourn thee, my beloved boy; but not now—not now: never will I shed a tear for thy death till I have cleared thy fame.—Hear me, ye midnight murderers, he was innocent (*raising his voice*)—upright as the truth itself. Let the man who dares gainsay me lift that gage. If the Almighty does not strengthen these frail limbs, to make good a father's quarrel, I have a son left, who will vindicate the honour of Aspen, or lay his bloody body beside his brother's.

Rod. Rash and insensate! Hear first the cause. Hear the dishonour of thy house.

Isa. (*from the sacristy*). Never shall he hear it till the author is no more! (RUDIGER *attempts to rush towards the sacristy, but is prevented.* ISABELLA *enters wounded, and throws herself on* GEORGE'S *body.*)

Isa. Murdered for me—for me! my dear, dear son!

Rud. (*still held*). Cowardly villains, let me loose! Maltingen, this is thy doing! Thy face thou wouldst disguise, thy deeds thou canst not! I defy thee to instant and mortal combat!

Isa. (*looking up*). No! no! endanger not thy life! Myself! myself! I could not bear thou shouldst know ——Oh! (*Dies.*)

Rud. Oh! let me go—let me but try to stop her blood, and I will forgive all.

Rod. Drag him off and detain him. The voice of lamentation must not disturb the stern deliberation of justice.

Rud. Blood-hound of Maltingen! Well beseems thee thy base revenge! The marks of my son's lance are still on thy craven crest! Vengeance on the band of ye! [RUDIGER *is dragged off to the sacristy.*

Rod. Brethren, we stand discovered! What is to be done to him who shall descry our mystery?

Eldest Judge. He must become a brother of our order, or die!

Rod. This man will never join us! He cannot put his hand into ours, which are stained with the blood of his wife and son: he must therefore die! (*Murmurs in the assembly.*) Brethren! I wonder not at your reluctance; but the man is powerful, has friends and allies to buckler his cause. It is over with us, and with our order, unless the laws are obeyed. (*Fainter murmurs.*) Besides, have we not sworn a deadly oath to execute these statutes? (*A dead silence.*) Take to thee the steel and the cord (*to the eldest judge.*)

Eldest Judge. He has done no evil—he was the companion of my battle—I will not!

Rod. (*to another*). Do thou—and succeed to the rank of him who has disobeyed. Remember your oath! (*Member takes the dagger, and goes irresolutely forward; looks into the sacristy, and comes back.*)

Member. He has fainted—fainted in anguish for his wife and his son; the bloody ground is strewed with his white hairs, torn by those hands that have fought

for Christendom. I will not be your butcher.—(*Throws down the dagger.*)

Ber. Irresolute and perjured! the robber of my inheritance, the author of my exile, shall die!

Rod. Thanks, Bertram. Execute the doom—secure the safety of the holy tribunal!

[BERTRAM *seizes the dagger, and is about to rush into the sacristy, when three loud knocks are heard at the door.*

All. Hold! Hold!

[*The Duke of* BAVARIA, *attended by many members of the Invisible Tribunal, enters, dressed in a scarlet mantle trimmed with ermine, and wearing a ducal crown.—He carries a rod in his hand.—All rise.—A murmur among the members, who whisper to each other,* "*The Duke,*" "*The Chief,*" *&c.*

Rod. The Duke of Bavaria! I am lost.

Duke (*sees the bodies*). I am too late—the victims have fallen.

Hen. (*who enters with the Duke*). Gracious Heaven! O George!

Rud. (*from the sacristy*). Henry—it is thy voice —save me! [HENRY *rushes into the sacristy.*

Duke. Roderic of Maltingen, descend from the seat which thou hast dishonoured—(RODERIC *leaves his place, which the Duke occupies.*)—Thou standest accused of having perverted the laws of our order; for that, being a mortal enemy to the House of Aspen, thou hast

abused thy sacred authority to pander to thy private revenge; and to this Wolfstein has been witness.

Rod. Chief among our circles, I have but acted according to our laws.

Duke. Thou hast indeed observed the letter of our statutes, and wo am I that they do warrant this night's bloody work! I cannot do unto thee as I would, but what I can I will. Thou hast not indeed transgressed our law, but thou hast wrested and abused it: kneel down, therefore, and place thy hands betwixt mine (RODERIC *kneels as directed.*) I degrade thee from thy sacred office (*spreads his hands, as pushing* RODERIC *from him*). If after two days thou darest to pollute Bavarian ground by thy footsteps, be it at the peril of the steel and the cord (RODERIC *rises*). I dissolve this meeting (*all rise*). Judges and condemners of others, God teach you knowledge of yourselves! (*All bend their heads—Duke breaks his rod, and comes forward.*)

Rod. Lord Duke, thou hast charged me with treachery—thou art my liege lord—but who else dares maintain the accusation, lies in his throat.

Hen. (*rushing from the sacristy*). Villain! I accept thy challenge!

Rod. Vain boy! my lance shall chastise thee in the lists—there lies my gage.

Duke. Henry, on thy allegiance, touch it not. (*To* RODERIC.) Lists shalt thou never more enter; lance shalt thou never more wield (*draws his sword*). With

this sword wast thou dubbed a knight; with this sword I dishonour thee—I thy prince—(*strikes him slightly with the flat of the sword*)—I take from thee the degree of knight, the dignity of chivalry. Thou art no longer a free German noble; thou art honourless and rightless; the funeral obsequies shall be performed for thee as for one dead to knightly honour and to fair fame; thy spurs shall be hacked from thy heels; thy arms baffled and reversed by the common executioner. Go, fraudful and dishonoured, hide thy shame in a foreign land! (RODERIC *shews a dumb expression of rage.*) Lay hands on Bertram of Ebersdorf: as I live, he shall pay the forfeiture of his outlawry. Henry, aid us to remove thy father from this charnel-house. Never shall he know the dreadful secret. Be it mine to soothe his sorrows, and to restore the honour of the House of Aspen.

(*Curtain slowly falls.*)

END OF THE HOUSE OF ASPEN.

GOETZ OF BERLICHINGEN.

A TRAGEDY.[1]

[1] Goetz of Berlichingen, with the Iron Hand, a Tragedy, from the German of Goethe. By Walter Scott, Esq., Advocate. Edinburgh. London: Printed for J. Bell, No. 148 Oxford Street, opposite New Bond Street. 1799.

PREFACE.

GOETZ OF BERLICHINGEN, the heró of the following drama, flourished in the 15th century, during the reign of Maximilian the First, Emperor of Germany. Previous to this period every German Noble holding a fief immediately from the Emperor, exercised on his estate a specious of sovereignty subordinate to the Imperial authority alone. Thus, from the princes and prelates possessed of extensive territories, down to the free knights and barons, whose domains consisted of a castle and a few acres of mountain and forest ground, each was a petty monarch upon his own property, independent of all control but the remote supremacy of the Emperor.

Among the extensive rights conferred by such a constitution, that of waging war against each other by their own private authority, was most precious to a race of proud and military barons. These private wars were called *feuds*, and the privilege of carrying them on was named *Faustrecht* (club-law). As the empire advanced in civilisation, the evils attending

feuds became dreadfully conpicuous: each petty knight was by law entitled to make war upon his neighbours without any further ceremony than three days previous defiance by a written form called *Fehdbrief*. Even the Golden Bull, which remedied so many evils in the Germanic body, left this dangerous privilege in full vigour. In time the residence of every free baron became a fortress, from which, as his passions or avarice dictated, sallied a band of marauders, to back his quarrel, or to collect an extorted revenue from the merchants who presumed to pass through his domain. At length whole bands of these freebooting nobles used to league together for the purpose of mutual defence against their more powerful neighbours, as likewise for that of predatory incursions against the princes, free towns, and ecclesiastic states of the empire, whose wealth tempted the needy barons to exercise against them their privilege of waging private war. These confederacies were distinguished by various titles expressive of their object; we find among them the Brotherhood of the Mace, the Knights of the Bloody Sleeve, &c. &c. If one of the brotherhood was attacked, the rest marched without delay to his assistance; and thus, though individually weak, the petty feudatories maintained their ground against the more powerful members of the empire. Their independence and privileges were recognised and secured to them by many edicts; and though hated and occasionally oppressed by the princes and ecclesiastic

authorities, to whom in return they were a scourge and a pest, they continued to maintain tenaciously the good old privilege (as they termed it) of *Faustrecht*, which they had inherited from their fathers. Amid the obvious mischiefs attending such a state of society, it must be allowed that it was frequently the means of calling into exercise the highest heroic virtues. Men daily exposed to danger, and living by the constant exertion of their courage, acquired the virtues as well as the vices of a savage state; and among many instances of cruelty and rapine, occur not a few of the most exalted valour and generosity. If the fortress of a German knight was the dread of the wealthy merchant and abbot, it was often the ready and hospitable refuge of the weary pilgrim and oppressed peasant. Although the owner subsisted by the plunder of the rich, yet he was frequently beneficent to the poor, and beloved by his own family dependents and allies. The spirit of chivalry doubtless contributed much to soften the character of these marauding nobles. A respect for themselves taught them generosity towards their prisoners, and certain acknowledged rules prevented many of the atrocities which it might have been expected would have marked these feuds. No German noble, for example, if made captive, was confined in fetters or in a dungeon, but remained a prisoner at large upon his parole (which was called *knightly ward*), either in the castle of his conqueror, or in some other place assigned to him. The same

species of honourable captivity was often indulged by the Emperor to offenders of a noble rank, of which some instances will be found in the following pages.

Such was the state of the German nobles, when, on the 7th of August 1495, was published the memorable edict of Maximilian for the establishment of the public peace of the empire. By this ordinance the right of private war was totally abrogated, under the penalty of the ban of the empire, to be enforced by the Imperial Chamber then instituted. This was at once a sentence of anathema secular and spiritual, containing the dooms of outlawry and excommunication. —This ordinance was highly acceptable to the princes, bishops, and free towns, who had little to gain and much to lose in these perpetual feuds; and they combined to enforce it with no small severity against the petty feudatories:—these, on the other hand, sensible that the very root of their importance consisted in their privilege of declaring private war, without which they foresaw they would not long be able to maintain their independence, struggled hard against the execution of this edict; by which their confederacies were declared unlawful, and all means taken from them of resisting their richer neighbours.

Upon the jarring interests of the princes and clergy on the one hand, and of the free knights and petty Imperial feudatories on the other, arise the incidents of the following drama. The hero, Goetz of

Berlichingen, was in reality a zealous champion for the privileges of the free knights, and was repeatedly laid under the ban of the empire for the feuds in which he was engaged, from which he was only released in consequence of high reputation for gallantry and generosity. His life was published at Nuremberg, 1731; and some account of his exploits, with a declaration of feud (Fehdbrief) issued by him against that city, will be found in *Meusel's Enquiry into History*, vol. iv.

While the princes and free knights were thus banded against each other, the peasants and bondsmen remained in the most abject state of ignorance and oppression. This occasioned at different times the most desperate insurrections, resembling in their nature, and in the atrocities committed by the furious insurgents, the rebellions of Tyler and Cade in England, or that of the *Jacquerie* in France. Such an event occurs in the following Tragedy. There is also a scene founded upon the noted institution called the Secret or Invisible Tribunal. With this extraordinary judicatory, the members and executioners of which were unknown, and met in secret to doom to death those criminals whom other courts of justice could not reach, the English reader has been made acquainted by several translations from the German, particularly the excellent romances called *Herman of Unna*, and *Alf von Duilman*.

The following drama was written by the elegant Author of the *Sorrows of Werter*, in imitation, it is

said, of the manner of Shakspeare. This resemblance is not to be looked for in the style or expression, but in the outline of the characters, and mode of conducting the incidents of the piece. In Germany it is the object of enthusiastic admiration; partly owing, doubtless, to the force of national partiality towards a performance in which the ancient manners of the country are faithfully and forcibly painted. Losing, however, this advantage, and under all the defects of a translation, the Translator ventures to hope that in the following pages there will still be found something to excite interest. Some liberties have been taken with the original, in omitting two occasional disquisitions upon the Civil Law as practised in Germany. Literal accuracy has been less studied in the translation, than an attempt to convey the spirit and general effect of the piece. Upon the whole, it is hoped the version will be found faithful; of which the Translator is less distrustful, owing to the friendship of a gentleman of high literary eminence, who has obligingly taken the trouble of superintending the publication.

EDINBURGH, 3*d February* 1799.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MAXIMILIAN, *Emperor of Germany.*
GOETZ VON BERLICHINGEN, *a Free Knight of the Empire.*
ELIZABETH, *his Wife.*
MARIA, *his Sister.*
CHARLES, *his Son—a Boy.*
GEORGE, *his Page.*
Bishop of Bamberg.
ADELBERT VON WEISLINGEN, *a Free German Knight of the Empire.*
ADELA VON WALLDORF, *Widow of the Count von Walldorf.*
LEIBTRAUT, *a Courtier of the Bishop's.*
Abbot of Fuldah, residing at the Bishop's Court.
OLEARIUS, *a Doctor of Laws.*
Brother MARTIN, *a Monk.*
HANS VON SELBISS, } *Free Knights, in alliance*
FRANCIS VON SECKINGEN, } *with Goetz.*
LERSE, *a Cavalier.*
FRANCIS, *Squire to Weislingen.*
Female Attendant on Adela.
President, Accuser, and Avenger of the Secret Tribunal.
MEZLER, }
SIEVERS, }
LINK, } *Leaders of the Insurgent Peasantry.*
KOHL, }
WILD, }
Imperial Commissioners.
Two Merchants of Nuremberg.
Magistrates of Hielbron.

MAXIMILIAN STUMF, *a Vassal of the Palsgrave.*
An Unknown.
Bride's Father,
Bride,
Bridegroom,
} *Peasants.*
Gipsy Captain.
Gipsy Mother and Women.
STICKS *and* WOLF, *Gipsies.*
Imperial Captain.
Imperial Officers.
Innkeeper.
Sentinel.
Serjeant-at-arms.
Imperial Soldiers—Troopers belonging to Goetz, to Selbiss, to Seckingen, and to Weislingen—Peasants—Gipsies—Judges of the Secret Tribunal—Gaolers—Courtiers, &c. &c. &c.

GOETZ OF BERLICHINGEN,

WITH THE IRON HAND.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

An Inn at Schwarzenbergh in Franconia.

MEZLER *and* SIEVERS, *two Swabian Peasants, are seated at a table—At the fire, at some distance from them, two Cavaliers from Bamberg—The Innkeeper.*

Siev. Hansel! Another cup of brandy—and Christian measure.

Innk. Thou art a Never-enough.

Mez. (*apart to Sievers*). Repeat again that about Berlichingen—These Bambergers seem to take offence; they look sulky.

Siev. Bambergers!—What are they about here?

Mez. Weislingen has been two days up yonder at the castle with the Earl—they came with him from I know not where; they are his attendants—He is about to return back to Bamberg.

Siev. Who is that Weislingen?

Mez. The Bishop of Bamberg's right hand! a powerful lord, who lies lurking for the means of playing Goetz some trick.

Siev. He had better take care of himself.

Mez. Prithee tell that story once more. (*Aloud.*) How long is it since Goetz had a new dispute with the

Bishop? I thought all had been reconciled and smoothed up between them.

Siev. Ay! Reconciliation with Priests!—When the Bishop saw he could do no good, and always got the worse at hard blows, he complained to the Circle, and took care to make a good accommodation; while honest Berlichingen was condemned unheard, as he always is, even when he has the right.

Mez. God bless him! a worthy nobleman.

Siev. Only think! Was it not shameful? They have now imprisoned a page of his, even without the least crime—but they will be soon mauled for that.

Mez. How stupidly the last enterprise misgave! The Priest would have been in a furious chafe.

Siev. I do not believe it was owing to negligence—Look you, all had been discovered by Goetz' spies; we had the very best intelligence when the Bishop would come from the baths, with how many attendants, and which way; and, had it not been betrayed by some false brother, Goetz would have blessed his bath for him.

1 *Bam.* What are you prating there about our Bishop? I think you seek a scuffle.

Siev. Mind your own matters; you have nothing to do with our table.

2 *Bam.* Who taught you to speak disrespectfully of our Bishop?

Siev. Am I to answer *your* questions?—Only mind the gluttons—[*The* 1 *Bamberger strikes him a box on the ear.*

Mez. Fell the hound dead.

2 *Bam.* Here! if you dare—

[*They fall upon each other; a scuffle.*

Innk. (*separating them*). Will you remain quiet! Zounds! Get out of the house if you have anything to do together: in this place I will have order and decency. (*He gets the Bamberg Cavaliers out at the door.*)—And what did you want, ye asses?

Mez. No bad names, Hansel! your glasses may suffer. Come, comrade, we 'll go and have the game out.

Enter two Cavaliers.

1 *Cav.* What 's the matter?

Siev. Ah! Good day, Peter!—Good day, Beta!—From whence?

2 *Cav.* (*making signs*). You understand, not to mention whom we serve.

Siev. Is your master Goetz far from this at present?

1 *Cav.* Hold your peace!—Have you had a quarrel?

Siev. You must have met the fellows without—they are Bambergers.

1 *Cav.* What brings them here?

Siev. They attend Weislingen, who is above with the Earl at the Castle.

1 *Cav.* Weislingen?

2 *Cav.* (*aside to his companion*). Peter, we have found the game.—How long has he been here?

Mez. Two days—but he goes off to-day, as I heard one of the rascals say.

1 *Cav.* (*aside*). Did I not tell thee he was here?—We have now no time to spare—Come—

Siev. Help us first to drub the Bambergers.

2 *Cav.* There are already two of you—We must away—Adieu! [*Exeunt both Cavaliers.*

Siev. Flinching dogs, these troopers! They won't fight a stroke without pay.

Mez. I could swear they have something on hand.—Whom do they serve?

Siev. I should hardly tell——They serve Goetz.

Mez. So!—Well, now will we out upon these dogs—While I have a quarterstaff, I care not for their spits.

Siev. If we durst but once drub their masters so, who drag the skin over our ears! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Scene changes to the front of a Cottage in a thick Forest.

GOETZ DE BERLICHINGEN *discovered walking among the trees before the door.*

Goetz. Where linger my servants?—I must walk up and down, or sleep will overcome me—Five days and nights already upon the watch—But freedom gives relish to this mode of life; and when I have thee, Weislingen, I may have some rest.—(*Fills a glass of wine and drinks; looks at the flask.*)—Again empty.——George!—While this and my courage last, I can laugh at their principalities and powers!—They send round their favourite Weislingen to their uncles and cousins to calumniate my character—Very well—I am awake.—Thou didst escape me, Bishop; but thy dear Weislingen may pay the score.—George!—Does the boy not hear?—George! George!

Enter GEORGE, *endeavouring to put off the corslet of a full-grown man.*

Goetz. What kept thee? Wert thou asleep?—What masquerade is this, in the devil's name?—Come hither; thou dost not look amiss. Don't be ashamed, boy; thou art gallant. Ah! if thou couldst but fill it!—Is it Hans's cuirass?

Geo. He wished to sleep a little, and unclasped it.

Goetz. He is more delicate than his master.

Geo. Do not be angry! I took it gently away and put it on, and took my father's old sword from the wall, and sallied out to the meadow——

Goetz. And laid about you?—Fine work among the brambles and thorns!—Is Hans asleep?

Geo. He started up and cried to me when you called—I was trying to unclasp it when I heard you twice or thrice.

Goetz. Go take back his cuirass to him, and tell him to be ready with the horses.

Geo. I have fed them and rubbed them well down; they may come out when you will.

Goetz. Bring me a stoup of wine. Give Hans a glass, and tell him to be merry—there is good cause; I expect the return of my scouts every moment.

Geo. Ah! mighty sir!

Goetz. What 's the matter with thee?

Geo. May I not go along?

Goetz. Another time, George!—When we are intercepting merchants and plundering wagons—

Geo. Another time!—You have said that so often.—O this time, this time! I will only skulk behind; just peep at a side—I will gather up all the shot arrows for you.

Goetz. The next time, George!—You must first have a proper dress; a hauberk, and a lance.

Geo. Take me with you!—Had I been with you last time, you would not have lost your crossbow.

Goetz. Do you know that?

Geo. You threw it at your antagonist's head; one of his squires picked it up, and ran off with it.—Don't I know it?

Goetz. Did my people tell you so?

Geo. O yes: and for doing so, I play them all sorts of tunes on the fife while they dress the horses, and teach them such charming songs—

Goetz. Thou art a brave boy.

Geo. Take me with you to prove myself so.

Goetz. The next time, on my word! Thou must not go to battle unarmed as thou art—Besides, the approaching hour requires men. I tell thee, my boy, it will be a dear time—Princes shall beg their treasure from a man they hate. Go, George, give Hans his armour again, and bring me wine.—(*Exit* GEORGE.)—Where can my

people stay?—It is incomprehensible!——A monk!—What brings him here? (*Enter Brother* MARTIN.) Worthy father, good evening! Whither so late? Though a man of sacred peace, thou shamest many knights.

Mar. Thanks, noble sir!—I stand before you an unworthy brother of the order of St Augustin; my christened name Martin, from the holy saint.

Goetz. You are tired, brother Martin, and without doubt thirsty. (*Enter* GEORGE *with wine.*) Here, in good time, comes wine!

Mar. For me a draught of water. I dare drink no wine.

Goetz. Is it against your vow?

Mar. Noble sir, to drink wine is not against my vow; but because wine when drunken is against my vow, therefore I drink it not.

Goetz. How do you mean?

Mar. When thou hast eaten and drunken, thou art as it were new born—stronger, bolder, apter for action. After wine thou art double what thou shouldst be!—twice as ingenious, twice as enterprising, and twice as active.

Goetz. True—I feel it so.

Mar. Therefore shouldst thou drink it—but we——

[GEORGE *brings water.* GOETZ *speaks to him apart.*

Goetz. Go to the road from Darbach; lie down with thy ear to the earth, and listen for the tread of horses. Return immediately. [GEORGE *goes out.*

Mar. But we, on the other hand, when we have eaten and drunken, are the reverse of what we should be. Our sleepy digestion depresses our mental powers; in a weak body such sloth excites desires, which increase with the cause which produced them.

Goetz. One glass, brother Martin, will not set you asleep. You have come far to-day—(*Helps him to wine.*)—Here 's to all warriors!

Mar. In God's name!—I cannot defend idle people—yet all monks are not idle; they do what they can: I am just come from St Bede, where I slept last night. The Prior carried me into their garden, where they had raised beans, excellent sallad, cabbages to a wish, and such cauliflowers and artichokes as you will hardly find in Europe.

Goetz. That is no part of your business?

[*Goes out and looks anxiously after the boy. Returns.*

Mar. Would God had made me a gardener, or some other labourer, I might then have been happy! My Abbot loves me; the convent is involved in business; he knows I cannot rest idle, and so he sends me to manage what is to be done: I go to the Bishop of Constance.

Goetz. Another glass—A happy expedition!

Mar. The like——

Goetz. Why do you look at me so fixedly, brother?

Mar. I was admiring your armour.

Goetz. Would you have liked a suit? It is heavy, and toilsome to bear.

Mar. What is not toilsome in this world?—But what so much so as to renounce our very nature! Poverty, chastity, obedience—three vows, each of which singly is dreadful to humanity—united, insupportable; and to spend a lifetime under this burden, or to pant comfortless under the depressing load of an offended conscience—Ah! Sir Knight, what are the toils of your life compared to the sorrows of a state, which, from a misinterpreted notion of the Deity, condemns as crimes even those actions and desires through which we exist.

Goetz. Were your vow less sacred, I would give you a suit of armour and a steed, and we should go together.

Mar. Would to heaven my shoulders had strength to bear harness, and my arm to unhorse an enemy!—Poor weak hand, accustomed to swing censers, to bear crosses and banners of peace, how couldst thou manage the lance

and falchion? My voice, tuned only to Aves and Halleluiahs, would be a herald of my weakness to a superior enemy; otherwise should no vows keep me from entering an order founded by the Creator himself.

Goetz. To our happy return! [*Drinks.*

Mar. I pledge you upon your account only! Return to my prison must be to me ever unhappy. When you, Sir Knight, return to your walls with the consciousness of your strength and gallantry, which no fatigue can diminish; when you, for the first time, after a long absence, stretch yourself unarmed upon your bed, secure from the attack of enemies, and give yourself up to a sleep, sweeter than the draught after thirst—then can I speak of happiness.

Goetz. And accordingly it comes but seldom!

Mar. But when it does come, it is a foretaste of paradise. When you return back laden with hostile spoils, and tell, "Such a one I struck from his horse ere he could discharge his piece—such another I overthrew, horse and man;" then you ride your Castle around, and——

Goetz. What mean you?

Mar. And your wife—(*Fills a glass.*)—To the health of your lady! You have one?

Goetz. A virtuous, noble wife!

Mar. Well for him who can say so; his life is doubled. The blessing was denied for me, yet was it the finishing crown of creation. [*He wipes his eyes.*

Goetz (*aside*). I grieve for him. The sense of his situation chills his heart.

Enter GEORGE, *breathless.*

Geo. My Lord, my Lord, horses at the gallop!—two of them——They for certain——

Goetz. Bring out my steed; let Hans mount. Farewell, dear brother!—Be cheerful and duteous; God will give space for exertion.

Mar. Let me request your name.

Goetz. Pardon me—Farewell! [*Gives his left hand.*

Mar. Why the left?—Am I unworthy of the knightly right hand?

Goetz. Were you the Emperor, you must be satisfied with this. My right hand, though not useless in combat, is unresponsive to the grasp of affection. It is one with its mail'd gauntlet—You see, it is *iron!*

Mar. Then art thou Goetz of Berlichingen. I thank thee, Heaven, who hast shewn me the man whom princes hate, but to whom the oppressed throng! Let me kiss this hand, let me kiss it.

Goetz. You must not!

Mar. Let me, let me—Thou hand, more worth than the relic through which the most sacred blood has flowed! dead though thou seemest, thou livest a witness of the noblest confidence in God.

[GOETZ *adjusts his helmet, and takes his lance.*

Mar. There was a monk among us about a year, who visited you when your hand was shot off before Landshut. How he used to tell us what you suffered, and your grief at being disabled for your profession of arms; till you heard of one who had also lost a hand, and yet served long a gallant knight. I shall never forget it.

Enter PETER *and the other Cavalier. They speak apart with* GOETZ.

Mar. (*going on*). I shall never forget his words in the most noble, the most unreserved confidence in God: "If I had twelve hands, what would they avail me without his grace? then may I with only one and heaven to friend"——

Goetz. In the wood of Haslach too? (*Returns to Martin.*) Farewell, worthy brother!

Mar. Forget me not, as I shall never forget thee!

[*Exeunt* GOETZ *and his Troopers.*

Mar. The sight of him touched my heart—He spoke not, and my spirit sunk under his—Yet it is a pleasure to have seen a great man.

Geo. Worthy sir, you will sleep here?

Mar. Can I have a bed?

Geo. No, sir! I know a bed only by hearsay; in our lodgings there is but straw.

Mar. It will serve. What is thy name?

Geo. George, sir.

Mar. George!—thou hast a gallant patron-saint.

Geo. They say he was a knight; that would I like to be!

Mar. Stop! (*Takes a picture from his breviary and gives it to the Page.*) There thou hast him—follow his example; be brave, and fear God. [*Exit into the cottage.*

Geo. Ah! what a charming gray steed!—If I had but one like that—and the gilded armour—There is an ugly dragon—At present I shoot nothing but sparrows. O St George! make me but tall and strong; give me a lance, armour, and a horse, and then let the dragon come against me when it will. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

An Apartment in Jaxthausen, the Castle of Goetz of Berlichingen.

ELIZABETH, MARIA, *and* CHARLES *discovered.*

Char. Pray now, dear aunt, tell me again that story of the good child; it is so pretty—

Maria. Do you tell it to me, little rogue! that I may see if you pay attention.

Char. Wait then till I think——"There was once upon"—Yes—"There was once upon a time a child, and his mother was sick; so the child went"—

Maria. No, no!—"Then said his mother"—

Char. "I am sick"—

Maria. "And cannot go out;"

Char. "And gave him money, and said, Go and buy yourself a breakfast."

Maria. "The child went.—There met him an old man that was"—Now, Charles!

Char. —"that was—old"—

Maria. Indeed!—"that was not able to walk, and said, Dear child"—

Char. —"give me something; I have eat not a morsel yesterday or to-day. Then the child gave him the money"—

Maria. —"that should have bought his breakfast."

Char. "Then said the old man"—

Maria. "Then the old man took the child by the hand"—

Char. —"by the hand, and said—and became a fine beautiful saint—and said"—

Maria. "Dear child! the sacred Virgin rewards thee for thy benevolence through me: whatever sick person thou touchest"—

Char. —"with the hand"——It was the right hand, I think.

Maria. Yes.

Char. —"he will immediately become well."

Maria. "Then the child went home, and could not speak for joy"—

Char. —"and fell upon his mother's neck and wept."

Maria. "Then the mother cried, What's the matter with me? and became"—

Char. —"became—became"—

Maria. You do not mind—"and became well. And the child cured kings and emperors, and became so rich that he built a great abbey."

Eliz. I cannot understand why my husband stays. He has been away five days and nights, and he expected to have done his business much sooner.

Maria. I am very uneasy about it. Were I married

to a man who ever incurred such danger, I should die the first day.

Eliz. Therefore I thank God, who has made me of harder stuff!

Char. But must my father always ride out, when it is so dangerous?

Maria. Such is his good pleasure.

Eliz. Indeed he must, dear Charles!

Char. Why?

Eliz. Do you not remember the last time he rode out, when he brought you these fine things?

Char. Will he bring me any thing now?

Eliz. I believe so. Listen: There was a poor man at Stutgard who shot excellently with the bow, and gained a prize from the magistrates—

Char. How much?

Eliz. A hundred dollers;—and afterwards they would not pay him.

Maria. That was base, Charles.

Char. Shabby people!

Eliz. The poor man came to your father, and besought him to help him to his money; then your father rode out and intercepted two convoys of merchandise, and plagued them till they paid the money.—Would not you have ridden out too?

Char. No—For one must go through thick woods, where there are gipsies and witches—

Eliz. You little rogue!—Afraid of witches!

Maria. You are right, Charles!—Live at home in your castle, like a quiet Christian knight—One may do a great deal of good out of one's own fortune. These redressers of wrongs do more harm than good by their interference.

Eliz. Sister, you know not what you are saying—God grant our boy may turn brave as he grows up, and pull down that Weislingen, who has dealt so faithlessly with my husband!

Maria. We cannot agree in this, Eliza—My brother is highly incensed, and thou art so also; but I am cooler in the business, and can be less inveterate.

Eliz. Weislingen cannot be defended.

Maria. What I have heard of him has pleased me—Even thy husband speaks him good and affectionate—How happy was their youth when they were both pages of honour to the Margrave!

Eliz. That may be:—But only tell me, how can the man be good who lays ambushes for his best and truest friend? who has sold his service to the enemies of my husband? and, by invidious misrepresentations, alienates from us our noble Emperor, naturally so gracious?

[*A horn winded.*

Char. Papa! Papa!

[*The Warder sounds his horn. Henry opens the gate.*

Eliz. There he comes with booty!

Enter PETER.

Peter. We have hunted—we have caught the game!—God save you, noble ladies!

Eliz. Have you Weislingen?

Peter. Himself, and three followers.

Eliz. How came you to stay so long?

Peter. We watched for him between Nuremberg and Bamberg, but he did not come, though we knew he had set out. At length we found him; he had struck off sideways, and was living quietly with the Earl at Schwarzenberg.

Eliz. Then will my husband have *him* next for an enemy.

Peter. I told this immediately to my master—Up and away we rode for the forest of Haslach. And it was curious, while we were riding thither that night, that a shepherd was watching, and five wolves fell upon the flock, and were taken. Then my master laughed and

said, Good-luck to us all, dear companion, both to you and us!—And the good omen overjoyed us.—Just then Weislingen came riding along with four attendants—

Maria. My heart shudders in my bosom.

Peter. My comrade and I threw ourselves suddenly on him, and clung to him as if we were one body, while my master and the others fell upon the servants. They were all taken, except one who escaped.

Eliz. I am curious to see him—Will they come soon?

Peter. Immediately—They are riding over the hill.

Maria. He will be cast down and dejected.

Peter. He looks gloomy enough.

Maria. The sight of his distress will grieve me!

Eliz. O! I must get food ready—You must be all hungry.

Peter. Right hungry, truly.

Eliz. Take the cellar keys and draw the best wine—You have deserved the best. [*Exit* ELIZABETH.

Char. I 'll go with aunt.

Maria. Come then, you rogue!

[*Exeunt* CHARLES *and* MARIA.

Peter. He 'll never be his father—At his years he was in the stable—

Enter GOETZ, WEISLINGEN, HANS, *and other Cavaliers, as from horseback.*

Goetz (*laying his helmet and sword on a table*). Unclasp my armour, and give me my doublet—Ease will refresh me.—Brother Martin said well—You have put us out of wind, Weislingen!

[WEISLINGEN *answers nothing, but paces up and down.*

Goetz. Be of good heart!—Come, unarm yourself!—Where are your clothes?—Not lost, I hope, in the scuffle?—(*To the Attendants.*) Go, ask his servants; open the trunks, and see that nothing is missing.—Or I can lend you some of mine.

Weis. Let me remain as I am—It is all one.

Goetz. I can give you a handsome clean doublet, but it is only of linen—It has grown too little for me—I had it on at the marriage of the Lord Palsgrave, when your Bishop was so incensed at me.—About a fortnight before I had sunk two of his vessels upon the Maine—I was going up stairs to the venison in the inn at Heidelberg, with Francis of Seckingen. Before you get quite up, there is a landing-place with iron-rails—there stood the Bishop, and gave Frank his hand as he passed, and the like to me that was close behind him. I laughed in my sleeve, and went to the Landgrave of Hanau, who was always my noble friend, and told him, "The Bishop has given me his hand, but I wot well he did not know me." The Bishop heard me, for I was speaking loud—He came to us angrily, and said, "True, I gave thee my hand, because I knew thee not indeed."—To which I answered, "I marked that, my Lord; and so take your shake of the hand back again!"—The manikin's neck grew red as a crab for spite, and he went up the room and complained to the Palsgrave Lewis and the Princess of Nassau.—But we have had much to do together since that.

Weis. I wish you would leave me to myself!

Goetz. Why so?—I entreat you be at rest. You are in my power, and I will not misuse it.

Weis. That I am little anxious about—Your duty as a knight prescribes your conduct.

Goetz. And you know how sacred it is to me.

Weis. I am taken—What follows is indifferent.

Goetz. You should not say so.—Had you been taken by a prince, and shut up fettered in a dungeon, your gaoler directed to drive sleep from your eyes—

Enter Servants with clothes. Weislingen unarms and shifts himself. Enter CHARLES.

Char. Good-morrow, papa!

Goetz (*kisses him*). Good-morrow, boy!—How have you been behaving?

Char. Very well.—Aunt says I am a good boy.

Goetz. That's right.

Char. Have you brought me any thing?

Goetz. Nothing this time.

Char. I have learned a great deal—

Goetz. Aye!

Char. Shall I tell you about the good boy?

Goetz. After dinner.

Char. And I know something else.

Goetz. What may that be?

Char. "Jaxthausen is a village and castle upon the Jaxt, which has appertained in property and heritage for two hundred years to the Lords of Berlichingen"—

Goetz. Do you know the Lord of Berlichingen?—(*Charles stares at him.*) With all his extensive learning he does not know his own father. Whom does Jaxthausen belong to?

Char. "Jaxthausen is a village and castle upon the Jaxt"—

Goetz. I did not ask about that—I knew every path, pass, and ford about the place, before ever I knew the name of the village, castle, or river.——Is your mother in the kitchen?

Char. Yes, papa!—They are dressing a lamb, with nice white turnips.

Goetz. Do you know that too, Jack Turnspit?

Char. And my aunt is roasting an apple for me to eat after dinner—

Goetz. Can't you eat it raw?

Char. It tastes better roasted.

Goetz. You must have a tid-bit, must you?—Weislingen, I will be with you immediately—I go to see my wife.—Come, Charles!

Char. Who is that man?

Goetz. Bid him welcome.—Tell him to be cheerful.

Char. There's my hand, man!—Be cheerful—for the dinner will be ready soon.

Weis. (*takes up the child and kisses him*). Happy boy! that knowest no worse evil than the delay of dinner. May you live to have much joy in your son, Berlichingen!

Goetz. Where there is most light, the shades are deepest.—Yet I thank God for him.—We'll see what they are about. [*Exit with Charles and Servants.*

Weis. O that I could but wake and find this all a dream! —In the power of Berlichingen!—of him from whom I had so far detached myself—whose remembrance I shunned like fire—whom I hoped to overpower!—and he still the old true-hearted Goetz!—O Adelbert! couldst thou recall the days when we played as children, and drove the mimic chase round this hall; then thou lovedst him, prizedst him as thy soul! Who can be near him and hate him?—Alas! I am not here such as I was—Happy days! ye are gone—There in his chair by the chimney sat old Berlichingen, while we played around him, and loved each other like cherubs!——How anxious will be the Bishop and all my friends!—Well; I wot the whole country will sympathize with my misfortune. But what does it avail? Can that reflection give me the peace after which I struggle?

Re-enter GOETZ *with wine and beakers.*

Goetz. We'll take a glass till dinner is ready. Come, sit down—think yourself at home! Consider you are once more the guest of Goetz. It is long since we have sat side by side and emptied a flagon together—(*Fills.*) Come: a light heart!

Weis. Those times are over.

Goetz. God forbid! We shall hardly find more pleasant days than those which we spent together at the Margrave's court—when we were inseparable night and

day. I think with pleasure on the days of my youth.—Do you remember the battle I had with the Polander, and how I broke his frizzled pate for him?

Weis. It was at table; and he struck at you with a knife.

Goetz. However, I came off conqueror—And you had a quarrel upon the account with his comrade. We always stuck together like brave boys—(*Fills and hands to* WEISLINGEN.) I shall never forget how the Margrave used to call us Castor and Pollux: it does me good to think of it.

Weis. The Bishop of Wurtzburg called us so first.

Goetz. That Bishop was a learned clerk, and withal so gentle—I shall remember as long as I live how he used to caress us, praise our union, and describe the good-fortune of the man who has an adopted brother in a friend.

Weis. No more of that!

Goetz. Does it displease you? I know nothing more delightful after fatigue than to talk over old stories. Indeed, when I recall to mind how we were almost the same being, body and soul, and how I thought we were to continue so all our lives—Was not that my sole comfort when this hand was shot away at Landshut, and when you nursed and tended me like a brother?—I hoped Adelbert would in future be my right hand.—And now—

Weis. Alas!

Goetz. Hadst thou followed me when I wished thee to go to Brabant with me, all would have remained well. But then that unhappy turn for Court-dangling seized thee, and thy coquetting and flirting with idle women.—I always told thee, when thou wouldst mix with these lounging, begging Court-sycophants, and entertain them with gossiping about unlucky matches and seduced girls, and such trash as they are interested about—I always told thee, Adelbert, thou wilt become a rogue.

Weis. Why all this?

Goetz. Would to God I could forget it, or that it were

otherwise!—Art thou not as free and as nobly born as any in Germany, independent, holding under the Emperor alone —and dost thou not crouch amongst vassals?—What is the Bishop to thee? Allow he is thy neighbour, and can do thee a shrewd turn, hast thou not an arm and friends to requite him in kind? Art thou ignorant of the noble situation of a free knight, who rests only upon God, the Emperor, and himself, that thou canst bear thus to crawl at the footstool of a selfish malicious Priest?

Weis. Let me speak!

Goetz. What canst thou say?

Weis. You look upon the Princes as the wolf upon the shepherd. And yet, canst thou blame them for uniting in the defence of their territories and property? Are they a moment secure from the unruly chivalry of your free knights, who plunder their vassals upon the very high-roads, and sack their castles and towns? While upon the frontiers the public enemy threaten to overrun the lands of our dear Emperor, and, while he needs their assistance, they can scarce maintain their own security—is it not our good genius which at this moment suggests a mean of bringing peace to Germany, of securing the administration of justice, and giving to great and small the blessings of quiet? For this purpose is our confederacy; and dost thou blame us for securing the protection of the powerful Princes our neighbours, instead of relying on that of the Emperor, who is so far removed from us, and is hardly able to protect himself?

Goetz. Yes, yes, I understand you. Weislingen, were the Princes as you paint them, we should be all agreed —all at peace and quiet! Yes, every bird of prey naturally likes to eat its plunder undisturbed. The general weal!—They will hardly acquire untimely gray hairs in studying for that!—And with the Emperor they play a fine game—Every day comes some new adviser and gives his opinion. The Emperor means well, and would gladly

put things to rights—but because a great man can soon give an order, and by a single word put a thousand hands into motion, he therefore thinks his orders will be as speedily accomplished. Then come ordinances upon ordinances contradictory of each other, while the Princes all the while obey those only which serve their own interest, and help them to press under their footstool their less powerful neighbours—and all the while they talk of the quiet and peace of the empire!—I will be sworn, many a one thanks God in his heart that the Turk keeps the Emperor from looking into these affairs!

Weis. You view things your own way.

Goetz. So does every one. The question is, which is the right light in which they should be regarded?—And your plans are of the darkest.

Weis. You may say what you will; I am your prisoner.

Goetz. When your conscience is free, so are you.—But we talked of the general tranquillity—I stood as a boy of sixteen with the Margrave at an Imperial Diet. What harangues the Princes made! and worst of all, your spiritual allies—The Bishop rung into the Emperor's ears his regard for justice, till one wondered again—And now he has imprisoned a page of mine, at the very time when our quarrels were all accommodated, and I thought of nothing less. Is not all betwixt us settled? What is his business with the boy?

Weis. It was done without his knowledge.

Goetz. Then why does he not release him?

Weis. He has not borne himself as he should do.

Goetz. Not as he should do? By my honour, he has done as he should do, as surely as he was imprisoned both with your knowledge and the Bishop's! Do you think I am come into the world this very day, that I cannot see the tendency of all this?

Weis. Your suspicions do us injustice.

Goetz. Weislingen, shall I tell you the truth? Inconsiderable as I am, I am a thorn in your eyes, and Selbiss and Seckingen are no less so, while we retain our firm resolution to die sooner than to thank any one but God for the air we breathe, or pledge our faith and homage to any one but the Emperor. Hence they goad me from every quarter, blacken my character with the Emperor, and among my friends and neighbours, and spy about for advantage against me. They would fain take me out of the way; that was the reason for imprisoning the page whom I had despatched for intelligence: and you now say he did not bear himself as he should do, because he would not betray my secrets—And thou, Weislingen, art their tool!

Weis. Berlichingen!

Goetz. No more about it—I am an enemy to long explanations; they deceive either the maker or the hearer, and for the most part both.

Enter CHARLES.

Char. Dinner, father!

Goetz. Good news!—Come, I hope the company of my woman-folks will revive you—You always liked the girls—Ay, ay, they can tell many pretty stories of you.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Scene changes to the Bishop of Bamberg's Palace.

The Bishop, the Abbot of Fulda, OLEARIUS, LIEBTRAUT, *and Courtiers at table—The dessert and wine before them.*

Bishop. Are there many of the German nobility at your academy of Bologna?

Olear. Both of nobles and burghers; and, without

exaggeration, they acquire the most brilliant reputation. It is a proverb in the university: "As studious as a German noble."

Abbot. Ay!

Lieb. As studious as a German noble!—What may one not live to hear?—That have I never heard before.

Olear. Yes, they are the admiration of the whole university. Some of the oldest and most learned will be created even Doctors. The Emperor will doubtless be happy to intrust to them the highest offices.

Abbot. Do you know, for instance, a young man—a Hessian—

Olear There are many Hessians with us.

Abbot. His name was———Does nobody remember it? His mother was of the What-d'ye-call-them's?—Oh!—his father has but one eye—and is a marshal—

Lieb. Von Wildenholz.

Olear. I know him well. He is highly esteemed for his force in disputation.

Abbot. He has that from his mother.

Lieb. But I never heard that his father esteemed her the more for it.

Bishop. How call you the emperor that wrote your *Corpus Juris?*

Olear. Justinian.

Bishop. A worthy prince:—To his health!

Olear. To his memory! (*They drink.*)

Abbot. That must be a charming book.

Olear. It may be called the book of books, comprehending every rule.

Abbot. Every rule!—Then the ten commandments must be in it.

Olear. By implication; not explicitly.

Abbot. I meant so; plainly set down, without any explication.

Bishop. But the best is, you tell us that a State can

be maintained in the surest peace and obedience by receiving that statute-book.

Olear. Doubtless.

Bishop. All doctors of laws! (*They drink.*)

Olear. Would men spoke thus in my country!

Abbot. Whence come you, most learned sir?

Olear. From Frankfort, at your Eminence's service!

Bishop. Are you not on good terms with your countrymen?—How comes that?

Olear. It is odd enough—but when I went last there to collect my father's effects, the populace pelted me with stones when they heard I was a civilian.

Abbot. God keep us!

Olear. It is because their tribunal, which they hold in great respect, is occupied by vulgar people, ignorant of the Roman law. They decide according to certain edicts of their own, and some old customs recognised in the city and neighbourhood.

Abbot. That 's very right.

Olear. Yes; but then the life of man is short, and in one generation causes of every description cannot be decided; therefore it is better to preserve a collection of rules to be observed through all ages—and such is our Corpus Juris, which insures us against the mutability of judges.

Abbot. That 's a great deal better.

Olear. But the people are ignorant of that; and, curious as they are after novelties, hate any innovation in their laws, be it ever so much for the better. They hate a jurist as if he were a cut-purse or a subverter of the state, and become furious if one attempts to settle among them.

Lieb. You come from Frankfort?—I know the place well—we tasted of your good cheer there at the Emperor's coronation—but I know no one in that town of your name.

Olear. My father's name was Oilman—But after the example of many Curlians, for the decoration of the title-page of my legal treatises, I have latinized the name to Olearius.

Lieb. You did well to disguise it:—a prophet is not honoured in his own country—nor in the language thereof.

Olear. That was not the cause.

Lieb. Every thing has two reasons.

Abbot. A prophet is not honoured in his own country

Lieb. But do you know why, most reverend sir?

Abbot. Because he was born and bred up there.

Lieb. Well, that may be one reason—Another is, that upon a nearer acquaintance with these gentlemen, the rays of glory and honour that appear at a distance to invest them, totally disappear. They are just like old worsted stockings in a frosty night—Draw near, and the splendour is gone!

Olear. It seems you are placed here to tell pleasant truths.

Lieb. When I can discover them, my mouth seldom fails to utter them.

Olear. Yet you hardly seem to distinguish manner and place.

Lieb. There is no matter where you place a cupping-glass, provided it draws blood.

Olear. Buffoons are privileged, and we know them by their scurvy jests—But in future let me advise you to bear the badge of your order—a cap and bells!

Lieb. A cap!—True—should I take a fancy to have one, will you direct me to the place where you bought yours?

Bishop. Some other subject—Not so warm, gentlemen! At table all should be fair and quiet—Choose another subject, Liebtraut.

Lieb. Near Frankfort is an ample building called the correction-house——

Olear. What of the Turkish expedition, please your Excellence?

Bishop. The Emperor has it much at heart to restore peace to the empire, stop feuds, and secure the rigid administration of justice: then, according to report, he goes in person against the Turk.—At present domestic dissensions find him enough to do; and the empire, spite of four years of external peace, is one scene of murder. Franconia, Swabia, the Upper Rhine, and the surrounding countries are laid waste by presumptuous and restless knights—And here, Seckingen, Selbiss with one leg, and Goetz with the iron hand, sport with the Imperial mandates.

Abbot. If his Majesty does not exert himself, these fellows will carry us off in their portmanteaus.

Lieb. He would be a sturdy fellow indeed who should carry off the wine-butt of Fulda in a portmanteau!

Bishop. Besides, the last has been for many years my mortal foe, and molests me hourly—But it will not last long, I hope. The Emperor holds his court at Augsburg—we have taken our measures.—Doctor, do you know Adelbert of Weislingen?

Olear. No, please your Eminence.

Bishop. If you stay till his arrival, you will have the pleasure of seeing a most noble, most accomplished, and most gallant knight.

Olear. He must be excellent indeed who deserves such praises from such a mouth.

Lieb. And he was bred at no university.

Bishop. We know that—(*The attendants throng to the window.*) What's the matter?

Attend. Just now, Farber, Weislingen's servant, rode in at the Castle gate.

Bishop. See what he brings. He will announce his master. [*Exit* LIEBTRAUT. *They stand up and drink round.*

LIEBTRAUT *re-enters.*

Bishop. What news?

Lieb. I wish it had been told by another—Weislingen is a prisoner!

Bishop. How?

Lieb. Berlichingen seized him and three attendants near Haslach—One is escaped to tell you.

Abbot. A Job's messenger!

Olear. I grieve from my heart.

Bishop. I will see the servant—Bring him up—I will speak with him myself. Conduct him into my cabinet.

[*Exit Bishop.*

Abbot (*sitting down*). Another draught, however.

[*The Servants fill round.*

Olear. Does your Reverence not think of a turn in the garden? "Post cœnam stabis, seu passus mille meabis?"

Lieb. In truth, sitting is unhealthy for you, who are threatened with an apoplexy. (*The Abbot rises.*) Can I but once get these grave ones out of doors, I shall exercise their tempers a little! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

Scene changes to Jaxthausen.

MARIA, WEISLINGEN.

Maria. You love me, you say—Alas! I am perhaps but too much inclined to believe it.

Weis. Why not believe what I feel so well, that I am entirely thine!—(*Embraces her.*)

Maria. Softly!—I gave you one kiss for earnest, but you must encroach no further.

Weis. You are too strict, Maria!—Innocent love is pleasing in the sight of Heaven.

Maria. It may be so—But I must not build upon what you say; for I have been taught that caresses are as

strong as fetters, and that damsels when they love are weaker than Sampson when he lost his locks.

Weis. Who taught you so?

Maria. The abbess of my convent. Till my seventeenth year I was with her—and only with you for the first time have I ceased to regret her company. She had loved, and could tell.....She had a most affectionate heart—Oh! she was an excellent woman!

Weis. Then you resemble her.—(*Takes her hand.*) What would become of me were I to lose you?

Maria. That, I hope, is not likely to happen—But you must away.

Weis. I know it, dearest! and I will. Well do feel what a treasure I have purchased by this sacrifice!—Now, blessed be your brother, and the day on which he undertook to seize me!

Maria. His heart overflowed with hope for you and himself. Farewell! he said, I go to recover my friend.

Weis. That has he done. Would that I had studied the arrangement and security of my property, instead of neglecting it, and dallying at that worthless Court!—then couldst thou have been instantly mine.

Maria. Delay enhances pleasure.

Weis. Say not so, Maria, lest I dread that thy feelings are less keen than mine.—True, I deserved punishment, deserved to lose every glimpse of this heavenly prospect—But now! to be wholly thine, to live only in thee and in thy circle of friends—far removed from the world, to live for the enjoyment of all the raptures which two hearts can bestow—What is the favour of princes, what applauses of the universe, to such simple yet unequalled felicity?—Many have been my hopes and wishes; henceforth I am equally above both.

Enter GOETZ.

Goetz. Your page is returned already. He can

scarcely bring out a word for hunger and fatigue—My wife has ordered the poor knave to be taken care of. This much I have picked out—the Bishop will not give up my boy—an Imperial commission is to be granted, under which all matters are to be adjusted. But be it as he will, Adelbert, you are free:—Pledge me but your hand, that you will neither give open nor under-hand assistance to my avowed enemies.

Weis. Here I grasp thy hand. From this moment be our union and friendship as firm and unalterable as a primary law of nature! Let me take this hand also—(*Takes Maria's hand*)—and with it the possession of this lovely lady.

Goetz. Dare I promise for you?

Maria (*timidly*). If—if it is your wish——

Goetz. By good-luck our wishes will not differ on this point.——Thou need'st not blush—the glance of thy eye betrays thee. Well then, Weislingen, join hands, and I say *Amen!*—My friend and brother!—I thank thee, sister; thou spin'st more than flax, for thou hast drawn a thread which can fetter this wandering bird of Paradise. Yet thou look'st not quite open, Adelbert—What ails thee? *I* am fully happy! What I but hoped in a dream, I now see with my eyes, and feel as if I still dreamed. Now my vision is out—I thought to-night, that, in token of reconciliation, I gave thee this iron hand; and that you held it so fast that it broke away from my arm;—I started, and awoke. Had I but dreamed a little longer, I should have seen how thou didst make me a new living hand.—You must away this instant, to put in order thy castle and property. That damned Court has detained you long from both. I must call my wife—Elizabeth!

Maria. How transported is my brother!

Weis. Yet I am still more so.

Goetz (*to Maria*). You will have pleasant quarters.

Maria. They say Franconia is a fine country.

Weis. And I may venture to say that my castle lies in the most delicious part of it.

Goetz. That thou mayst, and I will swear to it—Look you, here flows the Mayne, around a hill clothed with cornfields and vineyards, its top crowned with a Gothic castle—then the river makes a sharp turn, and glides round behind the very rock on which it stands. The windows of the great hall look perpendicularly down upon the river—a prospect which would detain one for hours.

Enter ELIZABETH.

Eliz. What wouldst thou?

Goetz. You too must give your hand, and say God bless you!—They are a pair.

Eliz. So soon?

Goetz. But not unexpected.

Eliz. May ye ever love each other with the same affection as now—and as your love, so be your happiness!

Weis. Amen! On that condition I insure it.

Goetz. The bridegroom, my dear, must perforce away for a while; for this great event makes it needful for him to settle some concerns at home. He must bid adieu to the Bishop's Court, in order that that connexion may be broken off by degrees—Then he must rescue his property from the hands of some selfish stewards—and——But come, sister—come, Elizabeth; his squire has perhaps some private message to him.

Weis. None but what you may hear.

Goetz. Needless:—Franconians and Swabians! now that you are one of us, we may bid their Mightinesses the princes defiance to their beard.

[*Exeunt* GOETZ, ELIZABETH, MARIA.

Weis. (*alone*). God in Heaven!—and canst thou have reserved such happiness for one so unworthy?—It is too much for my heart. How meanly I depended upon

wretched fools, whom I thought I was governing by superiority of intrigue, subservient to the glance of homage-demanding princes!—Goetz, my faithful Goetz, thou hast restored me to myself—and my beloved Maria has completed my reformation. I feel free, as if brought from a dungeon into the open air.—Bamberg will I never more see—will snap all the shameful bands that have connected it and me. My heart rejoices, never more to undergo the degradation of struggling for boons that may be refused—He alone is great and happy who fills his own station of independence, and has neither to command nor to obey.

Enter FRANCIS.

Fran. God greet you, noble sir! I bring you so many salutations, that I know not with which to begin—Bamberg, and ten miles around, bid God greet you.

Weis. Welcome, Francis! Bring'st thou aught else?

Fran. You are in such consideration at Court that it cannot be expressed.

Weis. That will not last long.

Fran. As long as you live—and after your death it will shine more lasting than the marble inscription upon your monument.—How they took your misfortune to heart!

Weis. And what said the Bishop?

Fran. His ardent curiosity poured out question upon question, without giving me time to answer. He knew your accident already; for Farber, who galloped from Haslach, had brought him the tidings—But he would hear every particular—He asked so anxiously whether you were not wounded—I told him you were safe, from the hair of your scalp to the nail of your toe.

Weis. And what said he to the treaty?

Fran. He would have given up the page and a ransom to boot for your liberty. But he heard you were to be dismissed upon your parole, otherwise he had granted

to Berlichingen all he could ask. He charged me with a thousand messages to you—more than I can ever utter. O how he harangued! and concluded, "I cannot live without Weislingen!"

Weis. He must learn.

Fran. What mean ye?—He bids you hasten to him—All the Court expects you.

Weis. Let them expect on—The Court will I never, never again see.

Fran. Not see the Court!—My gracious Lord, how comes that? Did you know what I know—could you but dream what I have seen—

Weis. What may it be?

Fran. The bare recital would put me mad.—Bamberg is no longer Bamberg—An angel of Heaven, in semblance of woman, has taken her abode in it, and it is become Paradise.

Weis. No more than that?

Fran. May I become a shaven friar, if the bare glimpse of her does not drive you frantic.

Weis. Who is it, then?

Fran. Adela von Walldorf.

Weis. She!—I have heard much of her beauty.

Fran. Heard!—As well might you say I have *seen* music. So far is the tongue from being able to rehearse the slightest article of her beauty, that the very eye which beholds her cannot drink it all in.

Weis. You are mad.

Fran. That may well be. The last time I was in her company, I had no more sense than if I had been drunk; or, I may rather say, I felt at that moment like a glorified saint enjoying the angelic vision!—All my senses exalted, and more lively than ever—yet not one at their owner's command.

Weis. Enthusiast!

Fran. As I took leave of the Bishop, she sat by him—they played at chess—He was very gracious—gave me his hand to kiss, and said much, of which I understood never a syllable. As I looked on his fair antagonist, her eye was fixed upon the board, as if meditating a grand stroke—Traces of attentive intelligence around the mouth and cheek—I could have wished to be the ivory king—The mixture of dignity and feeling on the brow—and the dazzling lustre of her neck and breast, overshaded by her raven ringlets—

Weis. Thou art become a poet upon the subject.

Fran. I felt at the moment the inspiration of a bard—my whole faculties were concentrated in one object. As the Bishop ended and I made my obeisance, she looked up and said, "Carry your master the best wishes of an unknown. He must not despise them, though he is already so rich in old friends."—I would have answered somewhat, but the passage betwixt my heart and my tongue was choked. I would have given my whole revenue for permission to touch but one of her fingers! As I stood thus, the Bishop threw down a pawn, and in stooping to lift it, I kissed the hem of her garment. Transport thrill'd through my limbs, and I scarce know how I left the room.

Weis. Is her husband at Court?

Fran. She has been a widow these four months, and is at the Court of Bamberg to divert her melancholy. You will see her—and to see her is to stand in the sun of spring!

Weis. She would make little impression on me.

Fran. I hear you are as good as married.

Weis. Would I were really so! My gentle Maria will be the happiness of my life. The sweetness of her soul beams through her mild blue eyes; and, like an angel composed of innocence and love, she guides me to the

paths of peace and felicity!——Pack up—and then to my castle—Never will I behold Bamberg, should St Bede come to guide me in person. [*Exit* WEISLINGEN.

Fran. (*alone*). God forbid!—But let me hope the best. Maria is beautiful and amiable, and I can excuse a prisoner and an invalid for loving her. In her eye is compassion and a melancholy sympathy—But in thine, Adela, is life—fire—spirit.——Would to—I am a fool—Such has one glance made me. My master must hence—*I* too must hence, and either recover my senses, or gaze them quite away. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Bamberg.—A Hall in the Bishop's Palace.

The Bishop, ADELA, LIEBTRAUT, *Ladies and Courtiers, discovered.*

Bishop. He will not return, they say.

Adela. I beseech you, put him out of your head.

Bishop. What can it mean?

Lieb. Poh! The message has been repeated to him like a paternoster. He has taken a fit of obstinacy; but I think I could soon cure him.

Bishop. Do so—Ride to him instantly.

Lieb. My commission—

Bishop. Shall be instantly made out. Spare nothing to bring him back.

Lieb. May I venture to use your name, gracious lady?

Adela. Ay, with all manner of propriety.

Lieb. Know you that 's a wide commission?

Adela. Know you not my rank and sex sufficiently to understand in what tone I am to be spoken of to an unknown nobleman?

Lieb. In the tone of a speaking-trumpet, think I.

Adela. You will always be a madcap.

Bishop. Well, well, take the best horse in my stable—choose your own servants, and bring him hither.

Lieb. If I do not, say that an old woman who deals in curing warts and freckles knows more of sympathy than I.

Bishop. Yet, what will it avail? Goetz has wholly gained him—He will be no sooner here than he will wish to return.

Lieb. He will wish it, doubtless; but can he do it? The squeeze of the hand from a prince, and the smiles of a beauty—from these could no Weislingen ever escape. —I have the honour to take my leave.

Bishop. A good journey!

Adela. Adieu! [*Exit Liebtraut.*

Bishop. When he is once here, I must trust to you.

Adela. Would you make me your lime-twig?

Bishop. By no means.

Adela. Your decoy-duck, then?

Bishop. No—that part plays Liebtraut. I beseech you do not refuse to do what no other can.

Adela. I will not. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Scene changes to Jaxthausen—A Hall in Goetz's Castle.

Enter GOETZ *and* HANS VON SELBISS.

Sel. Every one will applaud you for denouncing feud against the Nurembergers.

Goetz. It would have been a thorn in my very heart had I remained long their debtor. It is clear that they betrayed my page to the Bishop—They shall have cause to remember me.

Sel. They have an old grudge at you.

Goetz. And I at them. I am glad they have begun the fray.

Sel. These free towns ever hold part with the priests.

Goetz. Ay, truly do they!

Sel. But we will make hell hot for them!

Goetz. I wish the Burgomaster, with his gold chain, would come to take a peep at us—He would stare his wits away!

Sel. I hear Weislingen is one of us—Does he really join in our league?

Goetz. Not immediately—There are some reasons which prevent his instantly giving us assistance; but it is quite enough that he is not against us. The priest without him is what the mass would be without the priest.

Sel. When do we set forward?

Goetz. To-morrow or next day. There are merchants coming from Bamberg and Nuremberg to the fair at Frankfort—We may strike a good blow.

Sel. So be it, in God's name.

SCENE III.

Scene returns to the Bishop's Palace at Bamberg.

ADELA *and her Waiting-maid.*

Adela. He is here, sayest thou? I can scarce believe it.

Maid. Had I not seen him myself, I should have doubted it.

Adela. Then Liebtraut may coin the Bishop into gold for such a masterpiece of skill.

Maid. I saw him as he was about to enter the Palace —he rode a grey—The horse started when he came on the bridge, and would not move forward—The populace thronged up the street to see him—They rejoiced at the delay of the unruly horse—He was greeted on all sides, and he thanked them gracefully all around. He sate the

curvetting steed with an easy indifference, and betwixt threats and soothing brought him to the gate, followed by Liebtraut and a few servants.

Adela. How did he please thee?

Maid. Never man so much—He is as like that portrait of the Emperor, as if he were his son.—(*Pointing to a picture.*)—The nose somewhat less—but just such kindly light-brown eyes, and such fine light hair, curled like a boy's—A half-melancholy impression on his face—I know not how—but he pleased me so well—

Adela. I am curious to see him.

Maid. There were a Lord for you!

Adela. You little fool!

Maid. Fools and children speak truth, quoth the proverb.

Enter LIEBTRAUT.

Lieb. Now, madam, what do I deserve?

Adela. Horns from your wife!—for, from the description I hear, you have endangered the honour of many a family.

Lieb. Not so, gracious lady—you yourself will insure their tranquillity.

Adela. How did you contrive to bring him?

Lieb. You know well enough how they catch woodcocks—and why should I detail my little stratagems to you?—First, I pretended not to have heard a word of his design of retirement, and put him upon telling me the whole story at length—Then I saw the matter quite in a different light—Could not find—could not see, and so forth—Then I spoke of Bamberg, and carelessly recalled to his memory old connexions; knitted together many a broken association of ideas. He knew not what to say—felt a new attraction to Bamberg, but durst not give way to it. When I found him begin to waver, and saw him too much occupied with his own feelings to suspect my sincerity, I threw the halter over his head, and by

the triple bond of beauty, court favour, and flattery, dragged him in triumph hither.

Adela. What said you of me?

Lieb. The mere truth—Said you were apprehensive about your property, and had hoped in his interest with the Emperor for its security.

Adela. 'Tis well.

Lieb. The Bishop will introduce him to you.

Adela. I expect them—(*Exit Liebtraut.*) And with such feelings have I seldom expected a visit.

SCENE IV.

Scene changes to Spessart, the Castle of Selbiss.

Enter SELBISS, GOETZ, *and* GEORGE *in the armour and dress of a Cavalier.*

Goetz. So, thou didst not find him, George?

Geo. He had ridden to Bamberg the day before with Liebtraut and two servants.

Goetz. I cannot see the reason of that.

Sel. I see it well—Your reconciliation was too speedy to be lasting—Liebtraut is a cunning fellow, and has inveigled him over.

Goetz. Think'st thou he would become a turncoat?

Sel. The first step is taken.

Goetz. I will never believe it. Who knows what he may have to do at Court—his affairs are unarranged. Let us hope the best.

Sel. Would to God he may deserve your good opinion, and *do* the best!

Goetz. A thought strikes me!—George shall to Bamberg, disguised in the spoils of the Bamberg trooper, and force the fellow to give him the password—He may then ride to the town and see how matters stand.

Geo. I have long wished to see Bamberg.

Goetz. It is thy first expedition. Take care, my boy; I should be sorry if ill-luck attended it.

Geo. Never fear—I shall not go wrong, were fifty of them to gabble about me. [*Exit George.*

SCENE V.

Scene returns to the Bishop's Palace—His Cabinet.

The BISHOP *and* WEISLINGEN.

Bishop. Then thou wilt stay no longer?

Weis. You would not wish me to break my oath?

Bishop. I could wish indeed thou hadst not sworn to them. But what evil spirit possesses thee? Can I not procure thee a release from that oath? Is my credit so trifling at the imperial and Roman Courts?

Weis. The thing is done!—excuse it as you can.

Bishop. I cannot comprehend where there was the least necessity for taking such a step—Were there not a thousand other ways of procuring thy freedom?—Had we not his page? And would I not have given gold enough to boot? Our operations against him and his confederates had gone so far——But, alas! I do not reflect that I talk to his friend, who has joined him against me, and can easily counterwork the mines he himself has dug.

Weis. Gracious my Lord . . . . .

Bishop. And yet, when I again look on thy face, again hear thy voice—it is impossible—impossible!

Weis. Farewell, good my Lord!

Bishop. I give thee my blessing—Formerly when we parted, I was wont to say "Till we meet again!"—Now—would to God we part for ever!

Weis. It cannot be otherwise.

Bishop. Perhaps I may next see thee as an enemy

before my walls, carrying havoc through the fertile plains of which till now thou hast been the protector!

Weis. Never, my gracious Lord!

Bishop. You cannot say so. My temporal neighbours have long had a grudge at me—but while thou wert mine ——Go then, Weislingen!—I have no more to say—Thou hast undone much—Go—

Weis. I know not what to answer. [*Exit Bishop.*

Enter FRANCIS.

Fran. The Lady Adela expects you. She is not well—but she will not let you go without bidding her farewell.

Weis. Come.

Fran. Do we go then for certain?

Weis. This very night.

Fran. I feel as if I were to leave the world—

Weis. And I—yet I—yet I know not wherefore.

SCENE VI.

Scene changes to Adela's Apartment.

ADELA *and Waiting-maid.*

Maid. You are pale, gracious Lady!

Adela. I love him not, yet I would wish him to stay.—Seest thou, I may wish his company, yet dislike him for my husband.

Maid. Does your Ladyship think he will go?

Adela. He has bid the Bishop farewell.

Maid. He has yet a severe struggle to make.

Adela. What meanest thou?

Maid. Gracious Lady, the barb'd hook is in his heart—ere he tear it away, he must bleed.

Enter WEISLINGEN.

Weis. You are not well, gracious Lady!

Adela. That is indifferent to you—you leave us, leave us for ever: why do you ask whether we live or die?

Weis. You do not know me.

Adela. I judge you by your actions.

Weis. Appearances are deceitful.

Adela. Then are you a cameleon.

Weis. Could you see my heart—

Adela. I should see fine things there.

Weis. Surely, your own image—

Adela. Thrust into some corner, like an old family-picture! I beseech you, Weislingen, consider with whom you speak—Fair words are a foul insult when they are belied by actions—A discovered masquerader plays but a pitiful part. Your deeds tell us how to think of you.

Weis. Be it as you will—I am so agonized at reflecting on what I am, that I little reck what the world thinks me.

Adela. You came to take farewell.

Weis. Permit me to kiss your hand, and I will say adieu!——You clear up—I did not think—But I am troublesome—

Adela. I only wished to assist your resolution.—Then you will away?

Weis. O say rather, I *must.* Am I not compelled by my knightly word—my solemn engagement?

Adela. Go! go! Talk of that to some forsaken damsel whose Corydon has proved forsworn.—Knightly word!—Nonsense!

Weis. You do not think so?

Adela. On my honour, you deceive yourself. What have you promised? and to whom? You have pledged your alliance to a traitor to the Emperor, at the very moment when he incurred the ban of the Empire for kidnapping you upon the Imperial high-road. Such an agreement is no more binding than an extorted unjust oath, Every child knows what faith is to be kept with

robbers—And there is more behind—By this oath you are to become an enemy to the peace of the Empire—a disturber of domestic happiness and tranquillity—a rebel to the Emperor—the associate of robbers and marauders —of Goetz of Berlichingen, Frank of Seckingen, and Hans of Selbiss; men with hearts hard as the steel of their blades—With these freebooters canst thou have aught in common?—thou, Weislingen, with thy gentle temper.

Weis. Did but you know them—

Adela. I would Justice knew that Goetz. He has a high domineering soul—and woe to thee, therefore, Weislingen!—Go, and try to be his companion—Go, and receive his commands:—Thou art mild, gentle—

Weis. And he too—

Adela. But you are yielding, and he stubborn. Soon will he drive thee from thy own opinion. Thou wilt become the slave of a marauding baron; thou that mayst command princes!—'Twere a pity to dissuade you from so glorious a situation.

Weis. Did you but know how kindly he received me—

Adela. Gentle soul!—Think you so much of that? It was his duty as a knight—And what would he have gained by acting otherwise—or what wouldst thou have lost?—You would have been but the more welcome here. An overbearing man like—

Weis. You speak of your enemy.

Adela. I speak for your freedom; yet I know not why I should take interest in it—Farewell!

Weis. Permit me but a moment—(*Takes her hand. A pause.*)

Adela. Have you aught to say?

Weis. I must hence.

Adela. Then go—

Weis. Gracious Lady, I cannot.

Adela. You must.
Weis. Must this be the last—
Adela. I am ill—very unable to—
Weis. Look not on me thus!
Adela. Thou art our enemy—Should we smile at thee!
Weis. Adela!

Enter FRANCIS.

Fran. Noble sir, the Bishop inquires for you.
Adela. Go! go!
Fran. He begs you to come instantly.
Adela. Be gone! be gone!
Weis. I do not say adieu: I shall see you again.
[*Exeunt* WEISLINGEN *and* FRANCIS.

Adela. Me again? We must provide for that. Margaret, when he comes, refuse him admittance. Say I am ill—have a headach—sleep—any thing. This detains him, or nothing. [*Exeunt.*

A pause. Re-enter WEISLINGEN *and* FRANCIS.

Weis. She will not see me!
Fran. Night draws on; shall we saddle?
Weis. She will not see me!
Fran. Are you pleased to want the horses?
Weis. It is too late; we stay here.
Fran. God be praised! [*Exit.*

Weis. (*alone*). Thou dost stay!—Be on thy guard—the risk is infinite. My horse started at the entrance of the Palace gate—It was my good angel stood before him—he knew the dangers I was hurrying to meet. Yet it would be unjust to leave in confusion the affairs intrusted to me by the Bishop, at least without arranging them, so that they may be understood by my successor. That I can do without breach of faith to Berlichingen and his league—and that done they shall not detain me—Yet it would have been better that I had never come. But I will away to-morrow or next day—'Tis decided. [*Exit.*

SCENE VII.

Scene changes to a Cottage—The Bridal of a Peasant.

The Bride's Father, Bride, Bridegroom, and other Country-folks, GOETZ *of* BERLICHINGEN, *and* HANS *of* SELBISS, *all discovered at table—Troopers, Cavaliers, and Peasants attend.*

Goetz. It was a good fancy to make up your lawsuit by a merry bridal.

Bride's Fa. Better than ever I could have dreamed of, noble sir—to spend my days peaceably and quietly with my neighbour, and my daughter to look after me.

Bridegr. And I to get the bone of contention and a pretty wife into the bargain! Ay, the prettiest in the whole village. Would to God we had consulted your Honour sooner!

Goetz. How long have you been at law?

Bride's Fa. About eight years—For these periwig'd gentry never give a decision, unless you can tear it out of their very heart. The Devil fly away with the Assessor Sapupi for a damn'd swarthy Italian!

Bridegr. Yes, he 's a pretty fellow; I was before him twice.

Bride's Fa. I thrice—and it cost me many a fair guelder.

Goetz. Come, good-luck to the Bride! [*Drinks.*

Bride's Fa. Amen!—Ay, the Assessor alone pick'd from me eighteen gold guelders. God curse him!

Bridegr. Who?

Bride's Fa. Why, who else but Sapupi?

Goetz. The judge!—That is infamous.

Bride's Fa. He asked twenty: and there had I to pay them in his fine country-house. I thought my heart would have broken with anxiety. For, look you, my

Lord, I am well enough off with my house and little farm, but how could I raise the ready cash? He did not even leave me a single gold cross to carry me on my journey—At last I took courage and told him my case: when he saw I was desperate, he thrust me from him, and pushed me out of doors.

Bridegr. Impossible!—Sapupi?

Bride's Fa. Ay, just he; what do you start at?

Bridegr. The devil! He took fifteen guelders from me too!

Bride's Fa. Curse him!

Sel. They call us robbers, Goetz!

Bride's Fa. Bribed on both sides!—That delayed the judgment—Oh! the scoundrel!

Goetz. This must not be unavenged.

Bride's Fa. What can we do?

Goetz. Why—go to Spurs, where there is an Imperial visitation: make your complaint; they must listen to it, and help you to your own again.

Bridegr. Does your Honour think we shall succeed?

Goetz. I could promise you more surely if I had him by the ears.

Sel. The sum is worth the journey.

Goetz. Ay; many is the day I have ridden out for the fourth part of it.

Bride's Fa. (*to Bridegroom*). What think'st thou?

Bridegr. We 'll try, go as it may.

Enter a Cavalier.

Cav. The Nurembergers are set out.

Goetz. Whereabout are they by this time?

Cav. If we ride sharply we shall just catch them in the wood betwixt Burheim and Muhlbach.

Sel. Excellent!

Goetz. Well, my children, God bless you, and help every man to his own!

Bride's Fa. Thanks, gallant sir! Will you not pass the night here?

Goetz. It may not be. Adieu!

[*Exeunt* GOETZ, SELBISS, *and Soldiers.*

SCENE VIII.

Scene returns to a Hall in the Bishop's Palace at Bamberg.

ADELA *and* WEISLINGEN *discovered.*

Adela. Time begins to hang inexpressibly heavy here. I dare not speak seriously, and I am ashamed to trifle with you—Ennui is worse a hundred times than a slow fever.

Weis. Tired of me already!

Adela. Not so much of you as of your irresolution. I would you were where you wished to go, and that we had not detained you!

Weis. Such is your sex:—First they cherish with maternal care our infant hopes—then, like the stupid ostrich, leave them to destruction.

Adela. You rail at women, as the losing gambler tears and curses the harmless cards which have been the instruments of his loss: But let me tell you something about *men*—What are you that talk of fickleness? You that are seldom even what you would wish to be, never what you should be. Holiday princes!—the envy of those who see but your outside. O what would a tailor's wife give for a necklace of the pearls on the skirt of your frock!

Weis. You are severe.

Adela. It is but the antistrophe to your satire. Ere I knew you, Weislingen, I felt something like the poor tailor's wife—Hundred-tongued rumour, to speak without a figure, had exerted so many mouths in your praise, that I was tempted to think—O that I could but see this

quintessence of manhood, this phœnix Weislingen!—I had my wish—

Weis. And found the phœnix a common bird.

Adela. No, Weislingen, I took an interest in you—

Weis. So it appears.

Adela. So it *was*—for you really surpassed your reputation. The multitude prize only the show of worth; but I do not examine so superficially as the multitude those whom I esteem—After some time's acquaintance, something, I knew not what, was missing about you; at length my eyes were opened—I saw the energetic being never dead to the thoughts of fame—that being who was wont to pile princely project on project, till, like the mountains of the giants, they reached the clouds, I saw him at once become as querulous as a sick poet, as melancholy as a forsaken damsel, and as moody as an old bachelor. At length I supposed something of importance lay at your heart, and excused you as well as I could; but now, that from day to day it becomes worse, we must really break off our treaty; I hope you will find a companion for life better able to bear with you.

Weis. Dismiss me, then.

Adela. Not till all chance of your recovery is lost—Solitude is fatal in your distemper—Alas! poor soul! you need as much petting as one that has lost his first true love—and yet I won't give you up. Give me your hand, and pardon what my affection has dictated.

Weis. Couldst thou but love me, couldst thou but return the fervour of my passion with the least glow of sympathy—Adela, thy reproaches are very unjust. Couldst thou but guess the hundredth part of my sufferings, you would not treat me with meckery, indifference, and contempt—thou wouldst not torture me in every way so cruelly——You smile—To be satisfied with myself after the step I have taken must be the work of more than one day—To plot against him who is yet warm in my affection—

Adela. Strange being!—To love him against whom you plot, is to send provisions to an enemy.

Weis. I well know there needs no dallying. He now knows that I am again Weislingen; and he is not a man to brook what I have done. Besides, Adela, we are not so sluggish as you think. Our forces are hardy and watchful, our schemes are going forward, and the diet of Augsburg will, I hope, bring them to a favourable issue.

Adela. You go there?

Weis. If I could carry a glimpse of hope with me!

[*Kisses her hand.*

Adela. Ah! infidel!—Always signs and wonders required. Go, Weislingen, and accomplish the great work! The interest of the Bishop, yours, mine, are all so wrapped together, that were it but policy—

Weis. You jest.

Adela. I do not jest. The haughty Duke has seized my property—Yours will not long escape Goetz; and if we do not unite together, and sway the Emperor to our side, we are lost.

Weis. I fear nothing. The greater part of the Princes are on our side—The Emperor needs assistance against the Turks, and is therefore willing to favour us. What rapture for me to rescue your fortune from rapacious invaders—to crush the mutinous chivalry of Swabia—to restore peace to the bishopric, and then!—

Adela. One day brings on another, and Fate is mistress of the future.

Weis. But we must lend our good-will.

Adela. We do so.

Weis. But seriously.

Adela. Well then seriously—Do but go—

Weis. Enchantress! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX.

Scene changes to Spessart.

Enter GOETZ, SELBISS, *and* GEORGE.

Sel. You see it is as I prophesied.

Goetz. No, no, no.

Geo. I tell you truth, believe me. I did as you directed, and with the dress and password escorted some peasants of the Lower Rhine to Bamberg, who paid my expenses for my convoy as a trooper of the Bishop.

Sel. In that disguise? It might have cost thee dear.

Geo. So I thought afterwards. But a trooper who thinks too much beforehand will never make a bold stroke. I came to Bamberg, and in the very inn I heard them tell how the Bishop and Weislingen were friends again, and how Weislingen was to marry the widow of Walldorf.

Goetz. Hearsay!

Geo. I saw her as she rose from table. She is lovely, by my faith, lovely! He was with her. We all bowed —she thanked us all—He nodded, and seemed so pleased—They passed forwards, and every body cried, What a handsome pair!

Goetz. That may be.

Geo. Listen farther:—The next day he went to mass —I threw myself in his way; he was attended by only one squire; I stood at the steps, and whispered to him as he passed, "Two words from your friend Berlichingen." He started—I marked the consciousness of guilt in his face. He had scarcely the heart to look upon me—me, a poor horseboy!

Sel. His conscience is more degrading than thy situation.

Geo. "Art thou of Bamberg?" said he.—"I bring a message from the Knight of Berlichingen," said I, "and

am to inquire"——"Come to my apartment to-morrow early," quoth he, "and we will speak further."

Goetz. And you went?

Geo. Yes, truly, I went, and waited in his antechamber long—long; and his silken-jacketed pages flouted me on all hands. Flout on, thought I, if I had you—At length I was introduced. He seemed displeased—But what cared I?—I discharged my errand. When he had heard me out, he put on just such an angry blustering look as a coward that wants to look brave. He wondered most dreadfully that you should send a message to him by a horseboy. That piqued me. "There are but two sorts of people," said I, "The gallant and the base—and I serve Goetz of Berlichingen." Then he began, took every thing wrong; said, that you had hurried his motions, that he owed you no allegiance, and would have nothing to do with you.

Goetz. Hadst thou that from his own mouth?

Geo. That, and yet more—He threatened me—

Goetz. It is enough. He is lost for ever. Confidence and credulity have again blinded me. Poor Mary! how shall I tell this to thee?

Sel. I would rather have lost my other leg than have been such a turncoat.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

The Imperial Garden at Augsburg.

Enter two Merchants of Nuremberg.

1 *Mer.* We 'll stand here till the Emperor shall pass —He is just coming up the long avenue.

2 *Mer.* Who is with him?

1 *Mer.* Adelbert von Weislingen.
2 *Mer.* The friend of the Bishop—That 's lucky!
1 *Mer.* We 'll prostrate ourselves, and I 'll speak.
2 *Mer.* See! they come.

Enter the Emperor and WEISLINGEN.

1 *Mer.* He looks displeased.

Emp. I want courage, Weislingen. When I review my past life, well may I be dismayed at the recollection of so many half—ay, and wholly ruined undertakings—and all because the pettiest feudatory of the empire prefers his own whims to its welfare.

[*The Merchants throw themselves at his feet.*

1 *Mer.* Most mighty! most gracious!

Emp. Who are ye? what seek ye?

1 *Mer.* Poor merchants, from your imperial city of Nuremberg:—Goetz von Berlichingen and Hans von Selbiss fell upon thirteen of us as we journeyed from the fair at Frankfort, under an escort from Bamberg—they overpowered and plundered us. We request your imperial assistance and redress, else must we beg our bread.

Emp. Sacred heaven! what is this?—The one has but one hand, the other but one leg—with two hands and two legs what would they have done!

1 *Mer.* We most humbly beseech your Majesty to look with compassion upon our unfortunate situation.

Emp. Thus it goes:—If a merchant loses a bag of pepper, all Germany must be in arms; but when business occurs in which the Imperial Majesty is interested, should it concern dukedoms, principalities, or kingdoms, not a man must be disturbed.

Weis. You come at an unsuitable time. Go, and stay here for a few days.

Merchants. We recommend ourselves to your protection. [*Exeunt Merchants.*

Emp. Still new disturbances—They spring like the hydra's heads!

Weis. Which can only be checked by fire and sword.

Emp. Do you think so?

Weis. Nothing can be more certain, since your Majesty and the Princes of the Empire have accommodated your other disputes. It is not the body of the state that complains of this malady—Franconia and Swabia only glow with the embers of civil discord; and even there are many of the nobles and free barons that wish for quiet. Had we but once crushed Seckingen, Selbiss —and—and—and Berlichingen, the others would fall asunder; for it is their spirit which enlivens the rest.

Emp. Fain would I excuse these knights—they are noble and hardy. Should I be engaged in war, they would follow me to the field.

Weis. It is to be wished they might know their duty—Though even in that case it would be dangerous to encourage their mutinous bravery by posts of trust: For it is the Imperial mercy and mildness that they so dreadfully abuse, upon which the hope and confidence of their league rests; and it cannot be quelled till we withdraw the encouragement of their presumption, and destroy their power before the eyes of the whole world.

Emp. You advise force, then?

Weis. I see no other means of quelling the spirit of insurrection which has spread itself abroad. And do we not hear the bitterest complaints from the nobles, that their vassals and bondsmen attach themselves to the side of these restless beings?—a practice which destroys all feudal subordination, and must produce the most fearful consequences.

Emp. I shall despatch a strong force against Berlichingen and Selbiss; but I will not have them personally injured. Could they be seized prisoners, they should swear to renounce their feuds, and to remain in their own

castles and territories upon their knightly parole. At the next session of the Diet we will propose this plan.

Weis. A general exclamation of assent and joy will spare your Majesty the trouble of particular detail.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Scene changes to Jaxthausen.

Enter GOETZ *and* FRANCIS VON SECKINGEN.

Seck. Yes, my friend, I come to request the heart and hand of your fair sister.

Goetz. I would you had come sooner—Weislingen during his imprisonment obtained her affections, and I gave my consent. I let the bird loose—and he now despises the benevolent hand that fed him in his cage—He has flown to seek his mate God knows where!

Seck. Is this so?

Goetz. As I tell you.

Seck. He has broken a double band. 'Tis well for you that you were not still more nearly connected with the traitor.

Goetz. Yonder sits the poor maiden, wasting her life in lamentation and prayer.

Seck. I will comfort her.

Goetz. What! Would you think of marrying a forsaken—

Seck. It is to the honours of both, that you have been betrayed by him. Should the poor girl be caged in a cloister, because the first man she knew proved a worthless renegade? Not so—I keep my purpose—She shall be empress of my castles and heart!

Goetz. I tell you he was not indifferent to her.

Seck. Do you think I cannot efface the recollection of such a wretch? [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Scene changes to the Camp of the Party sent to execute the Imperial Mandate.

Imperial Captain and Officers discovered.

Capt. We must be cautious, and spare our people as much as possible. Besides, it is our strict orders to overpower and seize him alive. It will be difficult to obey—for who will match him hand to hand?

1 *Off.* 'Tis true. And he will bear himself like a wild boar. Besides, in his whole life he has never injured any of us, so each will willingly leave to the others the honour of risking their legs and arms in behalf of the Emperor.

2 *Off.* 'Twere shame to us should we not fight him. Had I him once by the ears, he should not easily shake himself clear.

1 *Off.* If his jaws had hold of you, they might chance to spoil your straight back. My gentle, young Sir Knight, such people don't fight like a coy wench!

2 *Off.* We shall see.

Capt. By this time he must have had our summons—We must not dally. I mean to despatch a troop to seek him out.

2 *Off.* Let me lead it.

Capt. You are unacquainted with the country.

2 *Off.* I have a servant who was born and bred here.

Capt. I am glad to hear it—Forward! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Scene changes to Jaxthausen.

SECKINGEN *alone.*

Seck. It goes to my wish! She looked at me from head to foot, comparing me no doubt to her gallant.—

Thank God I can stand the scrutiny!—She answered little and confusedly, then with more composure—O, it will do some day! A proposal of marriage does not come amiss after such a cruel disappointment.

Enter GOETZ.

Seck. How goes it, brother?

Goetz. Ill:—Laid under the ban.

Seck. How?

Goetz. There is the summons!—The Emperor has despatched a party to give my body to the beasts of the earth and the fowls of heaven.

Seck. They shall first furnish them with a dinner themselves—I am here in the very nick.

Goetz. No, Seckingen, you must leave me. Your great undertakings will be ruined should you become the enemy of the Emperor at so unseasonable a time. Besides, you can be of more use to me by remaining neuter. The worst that can happen is my being made prisoner; and then your timely good word with the Emperor, who esteems you, may rescue me out of the distress into which your untimely assistance will unremediably plunge us both. To what purpose should you do otherwise? The cry is against me; and could they say we were united, it would be only so much the louder. The Emperor pours forth this tide against me; and I should be utterly ruined, were it as easy to inspire courage into soldiers as to collect them into a body.

Seck. But I can privately send you a score of troopers.

Goetz. Good!—I have already sent George to Selbiss, and to my people in the neighbourhood. My dear brother, when my forces are collected, they will be such a little troop as few princes can bring together.

Seck. It will be small against the multitude.

Goetz. One wolf is too many for a whole flock of sheep.

Seck. But if they have a good shepherd?

Goetz. Never fear!—They are mere hirelings; and even the best knight can do little if he has not his motions at his own command. It happened once to me, that, to oblige the Palsgrave, I went to serve against Conrad Schotten; then they presented me with a paper of instructions from the Chancery, and said, Thus must you conduct yourself. I threw down the paper before the magistrates, and told them I would have nothing to do with it; that something might happen unprovided for in my instructions, and that I must order my motions from the information of my own eyes.

Seck. Good-luck, brother! I will hence, and send thee what men I can collect in haste.

Goetz. Come first to the women—I'll have you together: I would thou hadst her promise before thou goest!—Then send me the troopers, and come here in private to carry away my Maria; for my castle, I fear me, will be shortly no abode for women.

Seck. We will hope the best. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

Scene changes to Bamberg.—Adela's Chamber.

ADELA *and* FRANCIS.

Adela. So, the ban is to be enforced against both?

Fran. Yes—and my master has the happiness to march against your enemy the Duke. Gladly would I have gone too, had I not had the still greater pleasure of being despatched to you. But I will away instantly, and soon return with pleasant news—my master so commanded me.

Adela. How is it with him?

Fran. He is cheerful—and commanded me to kiss your hand.

Adela. There!—Thy lips glow.

Fran. (*aside, pressing his breast*). Here glows somewhat yet more fiery.—Gracious lady, your servants are the most fortunate of beings!

Adela. Who goes against Berlichingen?

Fran. The Baron von Sirau. Farewell!—Best, most gracious lady, I must away—Forget me not!

Adela. Thou must first take some rest and refreshment.

Fran. I need none—I have seen you!—I am neither weary nor hungry.

Adela. I know thy fidelity.

Fran. Ah, gracious lady!

Adela. You can never hold out; you *must* repose and refresh yourself.

Fran. Such care for a poor youth! [*Exit.*

Adela. The tears stood in his eyes. He interests me from the heart. Never did man love so warmly and so true. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.

Scene returns to Jaxthausen.

GOETZ *and* GEORGE.

Geo. He would speak with you in person. I know him not—a tall, well-made man, with dark keen eyes.

Goetz. Bring him in. [*Exit* GEORGE.

Enter LERSE.

Goetz. God greet you!—What bring you?

Lerse. Myself:—it is not much, but that is all I have to offer.

Goetz. You are welcome, doubly welcome!—A gallant man, and at a time when, far from expecting new friends, I trembled for the wavering fidelity of the old—Your name?

Lerse. Francis Lerse.

Goetz. I thank you, Francis, for having made me acquainted with a brave man!

Lerse. I made you acquainted with him once before, when you did not thank me for my pains.

Goetz. I remember nothing of it.

Lerse. I am sorry for that. Do you recollect when, to please the Palsgrave, you rode against Conrad Schotten, and went through Hassfurt on an Allhallow's-eve?

Goetz. I remember it well.

Lerse. And twenty-five troopers encountered you in a village by the way?

Goetz. Exactly. I took them only for twelve—and divided my party, which amounted but to sixteen, leaving part in the town, and riding forwards with the others, in hopes they would pass me, and be thus placed betwixt two fires.

Lerse. But we saw you, and guessed your intention. We drew up on the height above the village, in hopes you would attack us: when we observed you keep the road and go past, then we rode down on you.

Goetz. And then I first saw that I had put my hand into the wolf's mouth. Five-and-twenty against eight is no jesting business. Everard Truchsess killed one of my followers. Had they all behaved like him and one other trooper, it had been over with me and my little band.

Lerse. And that trooper—

Goetz.—Was as gallant a fellow as I ever saw. He attacked me fiercely; and when I thought I had given him enough, and was engaged elsewhere, he was upon me again, and laid on like a fury; he cut quite through my cuirass, and gave me a flesh-wound.

Lerse. Have you forgiven him?

Goetz. I had but too much reason to be pleased with him.

Lerse. I hope then you have cause to be contented with me, since my pattern exhibition was on your own person.

Goetz. Art thou he?—O welcome! welcome!—Canst thou say, Maximilian, thou hast such a heart amongst all thy servants!

Lerse. I wonder you did not sooner inquire after me.

Goetz. How could I think that the man would engage in my service who attacked me so desperately?

Lerse. Even so, my Lord—From my youth upwards I have served as a cavalier, and have had to do with many a knight. I was overjoyed to learn we were to attack you; for I had heard of your fame, and I wished to know you. You saw I gave way, and you saw it was not from cowardice, for I returned to the charge—In short, I did learn to know you, and from that hour I resolved to serve you.

Goetz. How long wilt thou engage with me?

Lerse. For a year—without pay.

Goetz. No—thou shalt have as the others, and as the foremost among them.

Enter GEORGE.

Geo. Hans of Selbiss greets you:—To-morrow he is here with fifty men.

Goetz. 'Tis well.

Geo. It is coming to sharps—There is a troop of Imperialists come forwards, without doubt, to reconnoitre.

Goetz. How many?

Geo. About fifty or so.

Goetz. No more!—Come, Lerse, we'll have a crash with them, that when Selbiss comes he may find some work done to his hand.

Lerse. 'Twill be a royal foretaste.

Goetz. To horse! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.

Scene, a Wood; on one side, a Morass.

Two Imperial Troopers meeting.

1 *Imp.* What makest thou here?

2 *Imp.* I have leave of absence for a little—Ever since our quarters were beat up last night, I have had such violent fits of illness that I cannot sit my horse for a minute.

1 *Imp.* Is the party far advanced?

2 *Imp.* A good way from the wood.

1 *Imp.* Then why do you linger here?

2 *Imp.* I prithee betray me not, I will to the next village and get something comfortable; it may help my complaint.—But whence comest thou?

1 *Imp.* I am bringing our officer some wine and meat from the nearest village.

2 *Imp.* So, so! he makes much of himself before our very faces, and we must starve—A fine example!

1 *Imp.* Come back with me, rascal.

2 *Imp.* Call me fool then!—There are plenty of our troop that would gladly fast three days to be as far from it as I am. [*Trampling of horses heard.*

1 *Imp.* Hear'st thou?—Horses!

2 *Imp.* Alas!—Alas!

1 *Imp.* I'll get up into this tree.

2 *Imp.* And I into the marsh. [*They hide themselves.*

Enter on horseback, GOETZ, LERSE, GEORGE, *and Cavaliers, all completely armed.*

Goetz. Away into the wood, by the ditch on the left—then we have them in the rear. [*They gallop out.*

1 *Imp.* (*descending*). This is a bad business—Michael!—He answers not—Michael, they are gone! (*Goes towards the marsh.*) Alas he is sunk!—Michael!—He

hears me not: he is suffocated—Poor coward, art thou done for? (*Loud alarm and trampling of horses.*) We are slain—Enemies! Enemies on all hands!

Re-enter GOETZ *and* GEORGE *on horseback.*

Goetz. Halt, fellow, or thou diest!

Imp. Spare my life!

Goetz. Thy sword! George, carry him to the other prisoners, whom Lerse is guarding behind the wood—I must pursue their fugitive leader. [*Exit.*

Imp. Pray, sir, what is become of the knight, our officer?

Geo. My master threw him head over heels from his horse, his feather-bush was the first thing reached the mire. His troopers got him up and ran as if the devil drove—March, fellow! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII.

Camp of Imperialists.

Captain and First Officer.

1 *Off.* They fly from afar towards the camp.

Cap. He will be hard at their haunches—Draw out fifty as far as the mill; if he follows the pursuit too far, you may perhaps entrap him. [*Exit Officer.*

[*The Second Officer is borne in.*

Cap. How now, my young sir, how like you the wolf's jaws?

2 *Off.* O curse your jokes! The stoutest lance went to shivers like glass—He is the devil!—He ran upon me, as if he had been that moment unchained: by Heaven, you would have thought him a thunderbolt.

Cap. Thank God that you have come off at all!

2 *Off.* There is little to be thankful for; two of my ribs are broken—Where's the surgeon? [*He is carried off.*

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX.

Scene changes to Jaxthausen.

Enter GOETZ *and* SELBISS.

Goetz. And what say you to this business of the ban, Selbiss?

Sel. 'Tis a stroke of Weislingen.

Goetz. Thinkest thou?

Sel. I do not think it—I know it.

Goetz. How?

Sel. He was at the Diet, I tell thee, and with the Emperor.

Goetz. Well, shall we give them another touch to-night?

Sel. I hope so.

Goetz. We'll away then to course these hares.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE X.

The Imperial Camp.

Captain, Officers, and Followers.

Capt. This, sirs, is doing nothing. He beats one squadron after another; and whoever escapes death or captivity, would rather fly to Turkey than return to the camp.—We must attack him once for all in a body, and seriously.—I will go myself, and he shall find with whom he has to do.

Off. I am glad of it—But he is so well acquainted with the country, and knows every pass and ravine so thoroughly, that he will be as difficult to find as a mouse in a corn-magazine.

Capt. I warrant you we'll manage to find him—On for Jaxthausen; at all events he must appear to defend his castle.

Off. Shall we all march?

Capt. Yes, truly—Don't you know that a hundred are melted away already?

Off. Then let us away with speed, before the whole snowball dissolves; for this is warm work, and we stand here like butter in the sun. [*Exeunt.—A march sounded.*

SCENE XI.

A Hill and Wood.

GOETZ, SELBISS, *and Troopers.*

Goetz. They come in full force—Seckingen's troopers joined us in good time.

Sel. We had better divide our force—I will take the left hand by the hill.

Goetz. And do thou, Lerse, carry fifty men straight through the wood on the right—Let them keep the high-road—I will draw up opposite to them.—George, thou stayest by me—When you see them attack me, then do you fall upon their flanks; we 'll beat the knaves into mummy—they little think we can hold them at the sword's point. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XII.

Scene changes to a neighbouring part of the wood—A high-road—On one side an eminence with a ruined watchtower; on the other, the forest.

Enter on march, the Captain of the Imperialists, with Officers, and his Squadron——Drums and Standards.

Capt. He halts upon the high-road! That 's too impudent. He shall repent it—What! not to fear the torrent that bursts loose upon him!

Off. You will not run upon iron pikes? He looks as

if he means to plant the first that comes upon him in the mire with his head downmost—Here let us wait him.

Capt. Not so.

Off. I entreat you—

Capt. Sound, trumpeter—and let us blow him to hell!

[*A charge sounded—Exeunt in full career.*

SELBISS, *with his Troopers, comes from behind the hill galloping.*

Sel. Follow me!—Shout—shout!

[*They gallop across the stage, et exeunt. Loud alarm*—LERSE *and his party sally from the wood.*

Lerse. Fly to the help of Goetz! He is surrounded. —Gallant Selbiss, thou hast cut thy way—we will sow the high-road with these thistle heads.

[*Gallop off. A loud alarm, with shouts and firing for some minutes.*

SELBISS *is borne in wounded by two Troopers.*

Sel. Leave me here, and hasten to Goetz.

1 *Troop.* Let us stay, you need our aid.

Sel. Get one of you on the watchtower, and tell me how it goes.

1 *Troop.* How shall I get up?

2 *Troop.* Get upon my shoulder; you can then reach the ruined part. [*First Trooper gets up into the tower.*

1 *Troop.* Alas! alas!

Sel. What seest thou?

1 *Troop.* Your cavaliers fly to the hill.

Sel. Hellish cowards!—I would that they stood, and I had a ball through my head!—Ride one of you full speed —Curse and thunder them back to the field—Seest thou Goetz? [*Exit Second Trooper.*

Troop. I see the three black feathers in the midst of the tumult.

Sel. Swim, brave swimmer—I lie here.

Troop. A white plume—Whose is that?

Sel. The captain.

Troop. Goetz gallops upon him—Crash! Down he goes!

Sel. The captain?

Troop. Yes.

Sel. Brave! brave!

Troop. Alas! alas!—I see Goetz no more.

Sel. Then die, Selbiss!

Troop. A dreadful tumult where he stood—George's blue plume vanishes too.

Sel. Climb higher—Seest thou Lerse?

Troop. No!—Every thing is in confusion!

Sel. No further—come down—How do Seckingen's men bear themselves?

Troop. So so—One of them flies to the wood—another—another—a whole troop.—Goetz is lost!

Sel. Come down—tell me no more.

Troop. I cannot—Bravo! bravo! I see Goetz—I see George—I see Lerse!

Sel. On horseback?

Troop. Ay, ay, high on horseback—Victory! Victory! —They fly!

Sel. The Imperialists?

Troop. Standard and all, Goetz behind them—He seizes the standard—he has it!—he has it!—A handful of men with him—My comrade reaches him—they come this way.

Enter GOETZ, GEORGE, LERSE, *and Cavaliers, on horseback.*

Sel. Joy to thee, Goetz!—Victory! Victory!

Goetz (*dismounting*). Dearly, dearly bought!—Thou art sorely wounded, Selbiss!

Sel. But thou dost live, and hast conquered!—I have done little; and the dogs my troopers—How hast thou come off?

Goetz. For the present, well. And here I thank George, and thee, Lerse, for my life. I unhorsed the captain—They stabb'd my steed, and broke in upon me. George hewed his way to me, and sprang off. I threw myself like lightning on his horse, and he appeared suddenly like a thunderbolt upon another.—How camest thou by thy steed?

Geo. A fellow struck at you from behind:—as he raised his cuirass in the exertion, I stabbed him with my dagger. Down he came!—and so I rid you of a backbiter, and helped myself to a horse.

Goetz. Then we stuck together till Francis here came to our help; and then we cut our way out.

Lerse. The hounds whom I led made a good show at first; but when we came to close, they fled like Imperialists.

Goetz. Friend and foe fled, except this little party of my own domestics who protected our rear. I had enough to do with the fellows in front; but the fall of their captain dismayed them—they wavered, and they fled. I have their banner, and a few prisoners.

Sel. The captain has escaped you?

Goetz. They rescued him during the scuffle. Come, boys—come, Selbiss—make a bier of lances and boughs —Thou canst not to horse—come to my castle. They are scattered, but we are very few; and I know not what troops they may have in reserve. I will be your host and physician.—Wine tastes so well after action!

[*Exeunt, carrying Selbiss.*

SCENE XIII.

The Camp.

The Captain and Imperialists.

Capt. I could crush you all with one hand. What!

to give way! He had not a handful of people remaining. To give way before one man! No one would believe it but for a joke's sake. Ride round the country, you, and you, and you:—bring up the reserved troops, and collect our scattered soldiers, or cut them down wherever you find them. We must grind these notches out of our blades, or make pruning-hooks of them. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XIV.

Jaxthausen.

GOETZ, LERSE, *and* GEORGE.

Goetz. Poor Selbiss is gone! We must not lose a moment. My good fellows, I dare allow you no rest. Gallop round and collect our cavaliers. Most of them dwell near Weilern, and there they will most likely be found. Should we dally a moment, they will be before the castle. (*Exeunt* LERSE *and* GEORGE.) I must send out scouts. It begins to be warm—Yet had I but a few stout fellows—but not of such fellows are the many composed. [*Exit.*

Enter SECKINGEN *and* MARIA.

Maria. I beseech thee, Seckingen, leave not my brother! His own horsemen, Selbiss's, yours, all are scattered; he is alone.—Selbiss is brought here dead, or mortally wounded. I fear the worst.

Sec. Be composed—I will not leave him.

Enter GOETZ.

Goetz. Come to the chapel—the chaplain waits—In five minutes you shall be made one.

Sec. Let me remain here.

Goetz. To the chapel!

Sec. Goetz!

Goetz. Will you not to the chapel?
Sec. Willingly, and then—
Goetz. Then you go your way.
Sec. Goetz!
Goetz. To the chapel!—Come, come. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XV.

Camp.

Captain and Officers.

Capt. How many in all?
Off. A hundred and fifty odd—
Capt. Out of five hundred.—Set on the march towards Jaxthausen, before he again collects his forces and attacks us on the way. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XVI.

Jaxthausen.

GOETZ, ELIZABETH, MARIA, *and* SECKINGEN.

Goetz. God bless you, give you happy days, and support the children with which he shall bless you!
Eliz. And may they be virtuous as yourselves—then let that come which will.
Sec. I thank you!—And you, my Maria! as I led you to the altar, you shall lead me to happiness.
Maria. Our pilgrimage will be in company towards that distant and high-praised land.
Goetz. Good-luck to your journey!
Maria. That was not what I meant—We do not leave you.
Goetz. You must, sister.
Maria. You were not wont to be so harsh.
Goetz. You are more affectionate than prudent.

Enter GEORGE.

Geo. I can gather no troopers: One was persuaded, but he changed his mind, and would not come.

Goetz. 'Tis well, George. Fortune begins to look cold upon me. Seckingen, I entreat you to depart this very evening. Persuade Mary—you are her husband—let her feel it.—When women regulate our motions, they are more dangerous than enemies in the field.

Enter a Cavalier.

Cav. The Imperial squadron is on full and rapid march hither.

Goetz. I have diminished them by skirmishes. How many are they?

Cav. About two hundred—They cannot be far from hence.

Goetz. Have they passed the river yet?

Cav. No, my Lord!

Goetz. Had I but fifty men, they should come no further.—Hast thou not seen Lerse?

Cav. No, my Lord!

Goetz. Tell all to hold themselves ready.—Weep on, my gentle Mary—Many a moment of pleasure shall be thy reward—It is better thou shouldst weep on thy wedding-day, than that too great joy should be the forerunner of future misery.—Farewell, Mary!—Farewell, brother!

Maria. I cannot away from you, sister—Dear brother, let us stay. Dost thou hold my husband so cheap as to refuse his help in thy extremity?

Goetz. Yes—it is gone far with me. Perhaps my fall is near—You are but beginning life, and should separate your lot from mine.—I have ordered your horses to be saddled—you must away instantly!

Maria. O brother! brother!

Eliz. (*to Seckingen*). Assist him to persuade her—Speak to her.

Sec. What can I say?—Dear Maria, we must go!

Maria. Thou too?—My heart will break!

Goetz. Then stay—In a few minutes my castle will be besieged.

Maria (*weeping bitterly*). Alas! alas!

Goetz. We will defend ourselves as we can.

Maria. Mother of God, have compassion upon us!

Goetz. And at last we must die or surrender—Thy tears will then have involved thy noble husband in the same miserable lot with me.

Maria. Thou torturest me!

Goetz. Remain, remain!—Seckingen, thou wilt fall into the grave with me, out of which I had hoped thou shouldst help me.

Maria. We will away—Sister—sister!

Goetz. Place her in safety, and then remember me.

Sec. Never shall I repose a night till I know thou art out of danger.

Goetz. Sister! dear sister! [*Kisses her.*

Sec. Away! away!

Goetz. Yet one moment!—I shall see you again—Be comforted, I shall see you again.—(*Exeunt* SECKINGEN *and* MARIA.) I drive her away—yet when she goes, what would I give to detain her!—Eliza, thou stayst by me—

Eliz. Till death! [*Exit.*

Goetz. Whom God loves, he gives such a wife!

Enter GEORGE.

Geo. They are near!—I saw them from the tower. The sun is rising, and I perceived their lances glitter. I minded them no more than a cat would do a whole army of mice. 'Tis true *we* play the rats at present.

Goetz. Go to the battlements—Look to the gates—See they are provided with stones and beams. We 'll find exercise for their patience, and their fury may discharge itself at the expense of their own nails—(*A trumpet from*

without—GOETZ *goes to the window.*) Aha! there comes a red gowned rascal to ask me whether I will be a scoundrel! What says he?—(*The voice of the Herald is heard indistinctly, as from a distance.* GOETZ *speaks at intervals.*) A rope for thy throat!—(*Voice again.*) "Offended Majesty!"—Some parson has drawn up the proclamation —(*Voice concludes, and* GOETZ *answers from the window.*) Surrender myself—surrender myself at all discretion!—With whom speak ye? Am I a robber? Tell your captain, that for his Imperial Majesty I entertain, as ever, all due respect; but for himself, he may—

[*Shuts the window with violence.—A sharp discharge of musketry, answered by firing from the castle.*

SCENE XVII.

The Kitchen.

ELIZABETH *preparing food—to her* GOETZ.

Goetz. You have hard work, my poor wife!

Eliz. Would it could but last!—but you can hardly hold out long.

Goetz. We have not had time to provide ourselves—

Eliz. And so many people to feed!—The wine is well-nigh finished.

Goetz. If we hold out a certain time, they must give us articles. We keep them at a fine distance—They may shoot the whole day, and wound our walls, and break our windows.—That Lerse is a gallant fellow—He slips about with his gun: if a rogue comes too nigh—Ba!—there he lies! [*Firing.*

Enter Cavalier.

Cav. We want live coals, gracious lady!

Goetz. For what?

Cav. Our bullets are spent; we must cast new.

Goetz. How lasts the powder?

Cav. There is yet no want: we spare our fire.
[*Firing at intervals. Exeunt* GOETZ *and* ELIZABETH.

Enter LERSE *with a bullet-mould.*

Lerse. Go, seek for lead about the house—meanwhile I will make a shift with this—(*Goes to the window, and takes out the lead frames.*) Every thing is fair. So it is in this world—no one knows what a thing may come to: the glazier that made these frames little knew that the work of his hands was to give some fellow his last headach; and the father that got me little thought that the fowls of heaven and the beasts of the field were to pick my bones.

Enter GEORGE *with a leaden spout.*

Geo. Here's lead for thee!—When we have used the half of it, there will none return to tell his Majesty "we have not sped."

Lerse (*cutting it down*). A famous prize!

Geo. The rain must seek some other way—But never mind that—a gallant trooper and a smart shower will always find their road. [*They cast balls.*

Lerse. Hold the crucible—(*Goes to the window.*) Yonder comes a fellow creeping forward with his popgun; he thinks our fire is spent—He shall have the bullet warm from the pan. [*He loads his carabine.*

Geo. (*sets down the mould*). Let me see—

Lerse (*fires from the window*). Yonder lies the game.

Geo. One of them fired at me as I got out on the roof to get the spout—He killed a pigeon that sat near me; it fell into the spout—I thanked him for my dinner, and stepped in with the double booty. [*They cast balls.*

Lerse. Now let us load, and go through the castle to earn our dinner.

Enter GOETZ.

Goetz. Stay, Lerse, I must speak with thee—I will not keep thee, George, from the sport. [*Exit* GEORGE.

Goetz. They demand a parley.

Lerse. I will out and hear what they have to say.

Goetz. They will require me to enter myself into ward in some town on my knightly parole.

Lerse. That's a trifle—What if they would allow us free liberty of departure? for we can expect no relief from Seckingen. We will bury all valuables, where they shall never find them—leave them the bare walls, and come out with flying colours.

Goetz. They will not permit us.

Lerse. It is but asking—We will demand a safe-conduct, and I will sally out. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XVIII.

A Hall.

GOETZ, ELIZABETH, GEORGE, *and Troopers at table.*

Goetz. Danger draws us together, my friends! Be cheery—don't forget the bottle! The flask is empty—Come, another, my dear wife!—(ELIZABETH *shakes her head.*)—Is there no more?

Eliz. (*low*). Only one, which I set apart for you.

Goetz. Not so, my love!—Bring it out; they need strengthening more than I.

Eliz. Hand it from the cabinet.

Goetz. It is the last, and I feel as if we need not spare it. It is long since I have been so much disposed for joy.—(*They fill.*) To the health of the Emperor!

All. Long live the Emperor!

Goetz. Be it our last word when we die! I love him, for our fate is similar; and I am happier than he.—He must direct his Imperial squadrons against mice, while the rats gnaw his parchment edicts. I know he often wishes himself rather dead than to be the soul of such a

crippled body as the empire.—(*They fill.*) It will go but once more round—And when our blood runs low, like this flask—when we pour out its last ebbing drop (*empties the wine dropways into his goblet*), what then shall be our word?

Geo. Freedom!

Goetz. Freedom!

All. Freedom!

Goetz. And if that survives us, we shall die happy: our spirits shall see our sons, and the emperor of our sons, happy!—Did the servants of princes shew the same filial attachment to their masters as you to me—Did their masters serve the Emperor as I would serve him—

Geo. It is widely different.

Goetz. Not so much so as would appear. Have I not known worthy men among the princes? and can the breed be extinct?—Men happy in their own minds and in their undertakings, that could bear a petty brother in their neighbourhood without feeling either dread or envy; whose hearts were opened when they saw their table surrounded by their free equals, and who did not think free knights unfit company till they had degraded themselves by court homage.

Geo. Have you known such princes?

Goetz. Well!—I recollect, when the landgrave of Hanau made a grand hunting-party, the princes and free feudatories enjoyed themselves under the open heaven, and the vassals were as happy as they; it was no selfish masquerade, instituted for his own private pleasure or vanity—To see the great round-headed peasant lads and the pretty brown girls, the sturdy hinds, and the respectable ancients, all as happy as if they rejoiced in the pleasures of their master, which he shared with them under God's free sky!

Geo. He must have been such a master as you.

Goetz. And shall we not hope that many such will

rule together some future day—to whom reverence to the Emperor, peace and friendship with neighbours, and the love of vassals, shall be the best and dearest family treasure handed down from father to son? Every one will then keep and improve his own, instead of reckoning nothing gained that is not ravaged from their neighbours.

Geo. And shall we then have no skirmishing?

Goetz. Would to God there was no restless spirit in all Germany, and still we should have enough to do! We might then chase the wolves from the cliffs, and bring our peaceable laborious neighbour a dish of game from the wood, and eat it together. Were that too little, we would join our brethren, and, like cherubims with flaming swords, defend the frontiers against those wolves the Turks, against those foxes the French, and guard for our beloved Emperor both extremities of his empire. There would be a life, George!—to risk one's head for the safety of all Germany—(GEORGE *springs up.*) —Whither away?

Geo. Alas! I forgot we were besieged—besieged by that very Emperor; and before we can expose our lives in his defence we must risk them for our lib ty.

Goetz. Be of good cheer.

Enter LERSE.

Ler. Freedom! freedom! You are cowardly poltroons —hesitating, irresolute asses—You are to depart with men, weapons, horses, and armour—Provisions you are to leave behind.

Goetz. They will hardly find enough to tire their jaws.

Ler. (*aside to* GOETZ). Have you hid the plate and money?

Goetz. No!—Wife, go with Lerse, and hear what he has to say to thee.

SCENE XIX.

Scene changes to the Court of the Castle.

GEORGE, *in the stable, curries his horse, and sings*—

It was a little naughty page,
Ha! ha!
Would catch a bird was clos'd in cage.
Sa! sa!
Ha! ha!
Sa! sa!

He seiz'd the cage, the latch did draw,
Ha! ha!
And in he thrust his knavish paw.
Sa! sa!
Ha! ha!
Sa! sa!

The bird dash'd out, and gain'd the thorn,
Ha! ha!
And laugh'd the silly fool to scorn!
Sa! sa!
Ha! ha!
Sa! sa!

Enter GOETZ.

Goetz. How goes it?
Geo. (*brings out his horse*). All saddled!
Goetz. Thou takest it cheerily.
Geo. As the bird that got out of the cage.

Enter all the Besieged.

Goetz. Have you all your carabines?——Not yet! Go, take the best from the armoury—'Tis all one—we 'll ride out.

Geo. And laugh the silly fools to scorn.
Ha! ha!
Sa! sa!
Ha! ha!

SCENE XX.

Scene changes to the Armoury.

Two Cavaliers choosing guns.

1 *Cav.* I take this.

2 *Cav.* I this—But yonder's a better.

1 *Cav.* Never mind—Make ready.

[*Tumult and firing without.*

2 *Cav.* Hark!

1 *Cav.* (*springs to the window*). Sacred heaven, they murder our master!—He is unhorsed!—George is down!

2 *Cav.* How shall we get off?—By the garden-wall, and so to the country. [*Exit.*

1 *Cav.* Lerse keeps his ground—I will to him—If they die, I will not survive them.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

An Inn in the City of Heilbron.

GOETZ *solus.*

Goetz. I am like the evil spirit conjured into a circle—I fret and labour, but all in vain—The false envious slaves!—(*Enter* ELIZABETH.)—What news, Eliza, of my dear, my trusty followers?

Eliz. Nothing certain: some are slain, some are prisoners; no one could or would tell me more particulars.

Goetz. Is that the reward of faith, of filial obedience? —For thy sake—Goetz!—O thou hast lived too long!

Eliz. Murmur not against our heavenly Father, my dear husband! They have their reward—It was born with them, a noble and generous heart—Even in the dungeon they are free. Think now of appearing before the Imperial Commissioners—Their awful presence, the splendour of their dress, and the golden chains which mark their dignity—

Goetz. —Become them like a necklace on a sow!— Would I could see George and Lerse in their dungeon!

Eliz. It were a sight to make an angel weep.

Goetz. I would not weep—I would grind my teeth, and gnaw my lip in fury.——What! the apples of my eye in fetters!—And have not the dear boys loved me? Never will I rest till I see them.——What! to break their word pledged in the name of the Emperor!

Eliz. Forget that—You must appear before the Commissioners—You are in an evil mood to meet them, and I fear the worst.

Goetz. When will they admit me?

Eliz. They will send a serjeant-at-arms.

Goetz. What—the ass of justice that carries the sacks to the mill, and the dung to the field?—What now?

Enter Serjeant-at-arms.

Serj. The Lords Commissioners are at the Council-house, and require your presence.

Goetz. I come.

Serj. I am to escort you.

Goetz. Too much honour.

Eliz. Be but cool.

Goetz. Fear me not. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Council-house at Heilbron.

The Imperial Commissioners seated in judgment—The Captain and the Magistrates of the City attending.

Mag. We have, according to your order, collected the stoutest and most hardy of our burghers to wait in the neighbourhood.

Com. We will communicate to his Imperial Majesty the zeal with which you have obeyed our illustrious commander—Are they artisans?

Mag. Smiths, coopers, and carpenters, men with hands hardened by labour—and resolute here—

[*Points to his breast.*

Com. 'Tis well!

Enter Serjeant.

Serj. Goetz von Berlichingen waits at the door.

Com. Admit him.

Enter GOETZ.

Goetz. God greet you, my Lords!—What would ye with me?

Com. First, that you consider where you are, and with whom?

Goetz. By my faith, I know it well, my Lords!

Com. You do but your duty in owning it.

Goetz. From the bottom of my heart!

Com. Be seated. [*Points to a stool.*

Goetz. What, there?—Down below?—I can stand—That stool smells of the criminal;—as indeed does its whole apparatus.

Com. Stand, then.

Goetz. To business, if you please.

Com. We 'll go on in order.

Goetz. I am happy to hear it—Would every one did as much!

Com. You know how you fell into our hands, and are a prisoner at discretion.

Goetz. What will you give me if I know no such thing?

Com. Could I give you good-manners, I would do you a good office.

Goetz. A good office!—Can *you* render any?—Good offices are more difficult than the deeds of destruction.

Sec. Shall I enter all this on record?

Com. Only what is to the point.

Goetz. Do as you please, for my part.

Com. You know how you fell into the power of the Emperor, whose paternal goodness overpowered his justice, and, instead of a dungeon, ordered you to wait your future doom, upon your knightly parole, in his beloved city of Heilbron.

Goetz. Well—I am here, and wait it.

Com. And we are here to intimate to you his Imperial Majesty's grace and clemency. He is pleased to forgive your rebellion, to release you from the ban, and all well-deserved punishment; provided you do, with suppliant humility, receive his bounty, and subscribe the articles which shall be read unto you.

Goetz. I am his Majesty's true servant, as ever. One word ere you go farther—My people—where are they?—what is to become of them?

Com. That concerns you not.

Goetz. So may the Emperor turn his face from you in your need!—They were my companions, and they are so—What have you done with them?

Com. We owe you no account of that.

Goetz. Ah! I had forgot—Never was promise kept by you to the oppressed. But, hush!

Com. Our business is to lay the articles before you.—Throw yourself at the Emperor's feet, and by humble

supplication you may find the true way to save the life and freedom of your associates.

Goetz. Your paper!

Com. Secretary, read it.

Sec. (reads). "I Goetz of Berlichingen make public acknowledgment, by these presents, that I having lately risen in rebellion against the Emperor and Empire"——

Goetz. 'Tis false!—I never offended either.

Com. Compose yourself, and hear further.

Goetz. I will not compose myself, and I will hear no further. Let any one arise and bear witness—Have I ever taken a step against the Emperor, or against the House of Austria?—Have I not in all my feuds conducted myself as one who felt what all Germany owes to its head—and what the free knights and feudatories owe to their liege lord the Emperor?—I should be a liar and a slave could I be persuaded to subscribe that paper.

Com. Yet we have strict orders to persuade you by fair means, or else to throw you into jail.

Goetz. Into jail?—Me?

Com. Where you may expect your fate from the hands of Justice, since you will not take it from those of Mercy.

Goetz. To jail! You abuse the Imperial power.—To jail! That was never his command.—What, ye traitors, to dig a pit for me, and hang out your oath, your knightly honour, as the lure! To promise me permission to ward myself on parole, and then to break your treaty!

Com. We owe no faith to robbers.

Goetz. Wert thou not the representative of my prince, whom I respect even in the vilest counterfeit, thou shouldst swallow that word, or choke upon it. I was taken in honourable though private war. Thou mightest thank God that gave thee glory, hadst thou ever done as gallant deeds as the least with which I am charged.—(*The Commissioner makes a sign to the Magistrates of Heilbron, who go out.*)—Because I would not join the iniqui-

tous confederacy of the great, because I would not grasp at the souls and livings of the helpless—'Tis in this lies my crime!—I defended my own life and the freedom of my children—See ye any rebellion in that? The Emperor and Empire were blinded to our hard case by your flatteries. I have, God be praised! one hand, and I have done my best to use it well.

Enter a Party of Artisans, armed with halberds and swords.

Goetz. What means this?

Com. Ye will not hearken———Apprehend him!

Goetz. Is that the purpose?—Let not the man whose ear does not itch come too near me; one salutation from my trusty iron fist shall cure him of headach, toothach, and every ach under the wide heaven!

[*They make at him—He strikes one down, and snatches a sword from another—They stand aloof.*

Com. Surrender!

Goetz (*with the sword drawn*). What! Wot ye not that depends but upon myself to make way through all these hares and gain the open field? But I will teach you how a man should keep his word.—Promise to allow me free ward, and I give up my sword, and am again your prisoner.

Com. How! Would you treat with your Emperor sword in hand?

Goetz. God forbid!—only with you and your worthy companions!—You may go home, good people: here deliberation is of no avail, and from me there is nothing to gain save bruises.

Com. Seize him, I say!—What! does your allegiance to the Emperor supply you with no courage?

Goetz. No more than the Emperor supplies them with plaster for the wounds which their courage would earn for them.

A Police-Officer enters hastily.

Off. The warder has just discovered from the castle-

tower a troop of more than two hundred horsemen hastening towards the town. They have already gained the hill, and seem to threaten an attack.

Com. Alas! alas! What can this mean?

A Soldier enters.

Sol. Francis of Seckingen waits at the drawbridge, and informs you that he has heard how perfidiously you have dealt with his brother-in-law, and how fruitless has been every appeal to the justice of the Council of Heilbron. He is now come to insist upon that justice; and if refused it, he will fire the four corners of your town within an hour, and abandon it to be plundered by his vassals.

Goetz. My gallant brother!

Com Withdraw, Goetz!—(*He steps aside.*)—What is to be done?

Mag. Have compassion upon us and our town!—Seckingen is inexorable in his wrath—he will keep his vow.

Com. Shall we forget what is due to ourselves and the Emperor!

Cap. Well said, if we had but men to support our dignity; but as we are, a show of resistance would only make matters worse.—We must gain time.

Mag. We had better apply to Goetz to speak a good word for us—I feel as the flames were rising already.

Com. Let Goetz approach.

Goetz. What would ye?

Com. Thou wilt do well to dissuade thy brother-in-law from his rebellious interference. Instead of rescuing thee, he will only plunge thee deeper in destruction, and become the companion of thy fall!

Goetz (*spies* ELIZABETH *at the door, and speaks to her aside*). Go—tell him instantly to break in and force his way hither, only to spare the town. As for the rascals here, if they oppose him, let him use force; there would

be no great matter had he a fair pretext for knocking them all upon the head.

[*Trampling and galloping heard—All the Magistrates shew signs of consternation.*

SCENE III.

Scene changes to the front of the Council-house, beset by Seckingen's Cavaliers.—A Pause.

Enter SECKINGEN *and* GOETZ *from the Council-house.*

Goetz. This was help from Heaven!—How camest thou so much to our wish, and beyond our hope, brother?

Sec. Without witchcraft. I had despatched two or three messengers to learn how it fared with thee, and heard from them of this villainy—I set out instantly, and now you have the power in your hand.

Goetz. I ask nothing but knightly ward upon my parole.

Sec. You are too moderate. Avail yourself of fortune, which for once has placed worth above malice! They were doing injustice; we 'll greet them with no kisses for their pains. They have misused the royal authority, and, if I know the Emperor, he will make thee ample reparation. —You ask too little.

Goetz. I have ever been content with little.

Sec. And hence hast thou ever been cut short even of that little. My proposal is, that they shall release your servants, and permit you all to return to your castle upon your parole—not to leave it till the Emperor's pleasure be known—You will be safer there than here.

Goetz. They will say my property is escheated to the Emperor.

Sec. So say we—but still thou mayst dwell there, and keep it for his service till he restores it to thee again. Let them wind like eels in the mud, they shall not escape us!—They will talk of the Imperial dignity—of their

orders—We 'll take that risk upon ourselves:—I know the Emperor, and have some influence with him—He has ever wished to have thee in his service—Thou wilt not be long in thy castle ere thou art summoned to serve him.

Goetz. God grant it ere I forget the use of arms!

Sec. Valour can never be forgot, as it can never be learnt. Fear nothing! When once thou art settled, I will seek the Imperial Court, where my enterprises begin to ripen—Good-fortune seems to smile on them—I want only to sound the Emperor's mind. The towns of Triers and Pfalz as soon expect that the sky should fall, as that I should come down upon their heads—But I will come like a storm of hail on the unsuspecting traveller; and if I am successful, thou shalt soon be brother to a prince. I had hoped for thy hand in this undertaking.

Goetz (looks at his hand). O! that explains to me the dream I had the morning that I promised Maria to Weislingen.—I thought he professed eternal fidelity, and held my iron hand so fast that it loosened from the arm.—Alas! I am at this moment more helpless, and fenceless, than when it was shot from me.——Weislingen! Weislingen!

Sec. Forget the traitor!—We will darken his prospects and cross his plans, till shame and remorse shall gnaw him to death.—I see, I see the downfall of my enemies, of thine—Goetz—only half a year.

Goetz. Thy soul soars high!—I know not how, but for some time no fair prospects have smiled upon mine—I have been in distress—I have been a prisoner ere now, but never before did I experience such a depression.

Sec. Fortune gives spirits—Come, let us to the periwigs—They have had our conditions long enough—we must call for their resolution. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Scene changes to the Palace of Adela—Augsburg.

ADELA *and* WEISLINGEN *discovered.*

Adela. This is detestable.

Weis. I have gnashed my very teeth—So fair a prospect—so well followed out—and at last to leave him in possession of his castle as before!—That damn'd Seckingen!

Adela. The Commissioners should not have consented.

Weis. They were in the net—What else could they do? Seckingen, the haughty and furious chief, thundered fire and sword at their ear.—I hate him—His power waxes like a mountain torrent—let it but gain two brooks, and others come pouring to its aid.

Adela. Have they no Emperor?

Weis. My dear wife—Old and feeble: he is only the shadow of what he should be—When he heard what was done, and I proposed to lead the readiest forces in his service against them: "Let them be!" said he; "I can spare my old Goetz his little fortress, and if he confines himself to it, of what can you complain?"—We spoke of the welfare of the state: "O," said he, "that I had rejected every advice which pushed me to sacrifice the peace of an individual to my own ambition!"

Adela. He has lost the very spirit of a prince!

Weis. We broke loose against Seckingen—"He is my faithful servant," said he; "for if he has not acted by my express order, he has performed what I would have wished better than my plenipotentiaries, and I can ratify what he had done as well after as before."

Adela. 'Tis enough to make one tear one's very flesh!

Weis. Yet I have not entirely renounced hope. Goetz has given his parole to remain quiet in his castle—'Tis

an impossibility for him to keep his promise, and we shall soon have some new subject of complaint.

Adela. 'Tis the more likely, as we may hope that the old Emperor will soon leave the world, and Charles, his gallant successor, promises to bear a princely mind.

Weis. 'Charles!—He is neither chosen nor crowned king of the Romans.

Adela. Who does not expect and hope that event?

Weis. You speak so warmly that one might think you saw him with partial eyes.

Adela. You injure me, Weislingen. For what do you take me?

Weis. I do not mean to offend—but I cannot be silent upon the subject—Charles's very unusual attentions to thee distress me.

Adela. And do I receive them as it—

Weis. Thou art a woman—and no woman hates a flatterer.

Adela. This from you?

Weis. It cuts me to the heart the dreadful thought, Adela!

Adela. Can I not cure thee of this folly?

Weis. When thou wilt—Thou canst leave the Court.

Adela. By what way or pretence? Thou art here—Must I leave thee and all my friends, to shut myself up with owls in your desolate castle? No, Weislingen, that will never do; set thy heart at ease, thou knowest I love thee.

Weis. That is the sheet-anchor while the cable holds! [*Exit.*

Adela. Takest thou it so? It is in vain. The undertakings of my bosom are too great to brook thy interruption. Charles—the great, the gallant Charles—the future Emperor—shall he be the only man not flattered to obey my power? Think not, Weislingen, to prevent it—Soon shalt thou to earth, if my way lies over thee!

Enter FRANCIS. *He gives a letter.*

Adela. Hadst thou it from Charles's own hand?

Fran. Yes.

Adela. What ails thee?—Thou look'st mournful!

Fran. It is your pleasure that I should pine away and waste the fairest years of hope in agonizing despair.

Adela (*aside*). I pity him—Be of good courage, youth! I feel thy love and truth, and will not be ungrateful.

Fran. (*sorrowfully*). Ere you can resolve to succour me, I shall be gone from you—Heaven! And there boils not a drop of blood in my veins but what is your own—I have not even a feeling but to love and to serve you!

Adela. My dear Francis!

Fran. You flatter me—(*Bursts into tears.*) Does this attachment deserve only to be sacrificed to another—only to see all your thoughts fixed upon Charles?

Adela. You know not what you wish, and yet less what you speak.

Fran. (*stamping betwixt remorse and rage*). No more will I be your slave, your go-between!

Adela. Francis, you forget yourself.

Fran. To sacrifice at once myself and my beloved master—

Adela. Go from my sight!

Fran. Gracious lady!

Adela. Go, betray to thy beloved master the secret of my soul!—Fool that I was! I thought thee what thou art not.

Fran. Dear lady! you know not how I love thee.

Adela. And thou, whom I thought my friend—so near my heart—go, betray me.

Fran. Rather would I tear the heart from my body!—Forgive me, gentle lady! my heart is too full, my senses forsake me.

Adela. Thou dear, hot-headed boy!

[*She takes him by both hands, and draws him towards her. He throws himself weeping upon her neck.*

Adela. Leave me!

Fran. (*his voice choked by tears*). God! God!

Adela. Leave me!—Walls are traitors—Leave me!—(*Breaks from him.*) Be but steady in faith and love, the fairest reward is thy own. [*Exit.*

Fran. The fairest reward! Let me but live till that moment—I could murder my father, were he an obstacle to its arrival! [*Exit.*

SCENE V.

Scene changes to Jaxthausen.

GOETZ *seated at a table with writing materials*, ELIZABETH *sits beside him with her work.*

Goetz. This idle life does not suit me. My imprisonment becomes daily more painful; I would I could sleep, or amuse myself with trifling.

Eliz. Continue writing the memoirs thou hast commenced of thy own deeds. Give thy friends evidence under thy hand to put thy enemies to shame; make thy noble neighbours acquainted with thy real character.

Goetz. Alas! writing is but busy idleness; it comes slowly on with me. While I write what I have done, I lament the misspent time in which I might do more.

Eliz. (*takes the writing*). Thou art now at thy first imprisonment, at Heilbron.

Goetz. That was always an unlucky place to me.

Eliz. (*reads*). "One of the confederates told me, that I had acted foolishly in espousing the cause of my very worst foes; but that I might be of good cheer, for I should be honourably dealt by."—And what didst thou answer? Write on.

Goetz. I said, Have I so often risked my life for the goods and gold of others, and should I not do so for the sake of my knightly word?

Eliz. Thus does fame speak of thee.

Goetz. They shall not rob me of this honour. They have taken from me all—property—liberty—

Eliz. I happened once to stand in an inn near the Lords of Millenberg and Singlingen, who knew me not—Then I experienced rapture as at the birth of my first-born; they extolled thee to each other, and said, He is the mirror of knighthood, noble and merciful in prosperity, dauntless and true in misfortune.

Goetz. Let them shew me where I have preferred my interest to my honour. God knows, my ambition has ever been to labour for my neighbour as for myself, and to acquire the fame of a gallant and irreproachable knight, rather than princedoms or power; and, God be praised! I have gained the meed of my labour.

Enter GEORGE *and* LERSE *with game.*

Goetz. Good-luck to my gallant huntsmen!

Geo. Such are we become from gallant cavaliers—Boots can be cut down into buskins.

Lerse. The chase is always something—'Tis an image of war.

Geo. Yes—if we were not always crossed by these Imperial gamekeepers. Don't you recollect, my Lord, how you prophesied we should become huntsmen when the world mended? We are become so, without any great chance of the other event.

Goetz. What goes on without?—We are cooped up here in a circle.

Geo. These are mark-worthy times!—For eight days a horrible comet has been seen—all Germany fears that it denotes the death of the Emperor, who is very ill.

Goetz. Ill?—Our weal then is at an end.

Lerse. And in the neighbourhood here are shocking commotions; the peasants have made a formidable insurrection.

Goetz. Where?

Lerse. In the heart of Swabia; they plunder, burn, and slay. I fear me they will sack the whole country.

Geo. It is a horrible warfare!—They have already arisen in a hundred places, and daily increase in number. A hurricane too has lately torn up whole forests; and in the place where the insurrection began, have been seen in the sky two fiery swords crossing each other.

Goetz. God preserve my poor friends and neighbours!

Geo. Alas! that we dare not ride out! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Scene, a Village plundered by the Insurgent Peasantry. Shrieks and tumult. Women, old Men, and children fly across the Stage.

Old Man. Away! away! fly from the murdering dogs.

Woman. Sacred Heaven! How blood-red is the heaven! how blood-red the rising sun!

Another. 'Tis fire!

A Third. My husband! my husband!

Old Man. Away! away!—To the wood! [*Exeunt.*

Enter LINK *and Insurgents.*

Link. Whoever opposes you, down with him! Let none of the booty be left—Plunder clean and quick—We must soon set fire—

Enter MEZLER, *coming down the hill.*

Mez. How goes it, Link?

Link. Look round; you are in at the death—From whence?

Mez. From Weinsberg.—There was a feast!

Link. How?

Mez. We stabbed them all, in such heaps it was a joy to see it!

Link. All whom?

Mez. Ditrich von Weiler led up the dance—There was sport for thee! We were all in a raging heap round the church steeple. He looked out and wished to treat with us—Baf!—a ball through his head—Up we rushed like a tempest, and the fellow soon made his exit by the window.

Link. Huzza!

Mez. (*to the Peasants*). Ye dogs, must I find you legs? How they gape and loiter, the asses!

Link. Burn away!—Kill and roast them in the flames! Out with your knives!

Mez. Then we brought out Helfenstein, Eltershofen, thirteen of the nobility—in all eighty. What a shouting and jubilee among our boys as they broke loose upon the long row of miserable rich sinners. Heaven and earth! how they struggled and stared on each other!—We surrounded them, and killed every soul with pikes.

Link. Why was not I there?

Mez. Never did I see such fun!

Link. On! on!——Bring all out!

Peasant. All 's clear!

Link. Then fire the place at the four corners.

Mez. 'Twill make a fine bonfire!—Hadst thou seen how the fellows writhed in a heap, and croaked like frogs! It warmed my heart like a cup of brandy. There was one Rexinger there, a fellow that, when he went to hunt with his white plume and his flaxen locks, used to drive us before him like dogs, and with dogs. I had not seen him all the while, when suddenly his droll visage look'd me full in the face—Push! went the spear between his ribs—and there he lay stretched all-fours above his companions. The fellows tumbled over each other, like the hares that were driven together at their grand hunting-parties.

Link. It smokes already! [*The village burns.*

Mez. All 's in flames!—Come, let us with the booty to the main body; it halts betwixt this and Heilbron. They wish to choose a captain whom every one will respect, for we are but equals;—they feel it, and turn restive.

Link. Whom do they think of?

Mez. Maximilian Stumf, or Goetz of Berlichingen.

Link. That 's well. 'Twould give the thing credit should Goetz accept it. He has been ever held a worthy independent knight. Away, away! Draw together!—We march towards Heilbron.

Mez. The fire will light us on our way. Hast thou seen the great comet?

Link. Yes—It is a dreadful ghastly sign!—As we marched by night we saw it well: it went towards *Eins.*

Mez. —And was visible for an hour and a quarter, like an arm brandishing a sword, and bloody red!

Link. Didst thou mark the three stars at the sword's hilt and point?—

Mez. —And the broad black clouds, illuminated by a thousand thousand streamers like lances and little swords?

Link. I saw it well—and beneath a pale white, crossed with fiery ruddy flames, and among them grisly figures with shaggy hair and beards.

Mez. Did you see them, too?—And how they all swam about as if in a sea of blood, and struggled all in confusion enough to drive one mad.

Link. Away! away! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Scene changes to an open country. In the distance two Villages and an Abbey are burning.

The Insurgents KOHL, WILD, *and* MAXIMILIAN STUMF.

Stumf. You cannot wish me for your leader; it were

bad for you and for me: I am a vassal of the Palsgrave, and how shall I arm against my liege lord? Besides, you would suspect I acted not from the heart.

Kohl. We knew well thou wouldst have some evasion.

Enter GEORGE, LERSE, *and* GOETZ.

Goetz. What would ye with me?

Kohl. You must be our captain.

Goetz. I am under ban; I cannot quit my territory.

Wild. That's no excuse.

Goetz. And were I free, and you dealing with the lords and nobles as you did at Weinsberg, and ravaging and plundering the whole lands, and should request me to be an abettor of your shameless raving doings—rather than be your captain, you should slay me like a mad dog!

Kohl. That should not be done, were it to do again.

Stumf. That's the very misfortune, that they have no leader whom they honour, and who may bridle their fury! I beseech thee, Goetz, take that office upon thee! I will be thy witness and thy surety against the ban. The princes will be grateful; all Germany will thank thee—Thou mayst persuade them to peace; the country and its inhabitants will be saved.

Goetz. Why dost thou not take it thyself?

Stumf. They have excused me.

Kohl. We have no time for dallying and useless speeches—Short and good!—Goetz, be our chief, or look to thy castle and thy head!—Take two hours to consider of it.

Goetz. To what purpose? I am resolved now as I shall be then.—Why are ye risen up in arms? If to recover your rights and freedom, why do you lay waste the land?—Will you abstain from such evil doings, and deal as men who know what they want?—then will I be your chief for eight days, and help you in your lawful and orderly demands.

Wild. What was done was done in the first heat, and we only needed thy prudence to have prevented it.

Kohl. Thou must be ours at least for a quarter of a year.

Stumf. Say four weeks—that will satisfy both.

Goetz. Well, then, as far as regards me . . . . .

Kohl. —Andwe agree!

Goetz. But you must promise to send the treaty you have made with me in writing to all your troops, and to punish infringers.

Wild. Well—it shall be done.

Goetz. Then I bind myself to you for four weeks.

Stumf. Good!—in what thou doest, take care of our noble lord the Palsgrave.

Kohl. (*aside*). Watch that none speak to him without our knowledge.

Goetz. Lerse, go to my wife—Stay with her—you shall soon have news of me.

[*Exeunt* GOETZ, GEORGE, LERSE, *and some peasants.*

Enter MEZLER, LINK, *and their followers.*

Mez. What hear we of a treaty? To what purpose the treaty?

Link. It is shameful to make any such bargain.

Kohl. We know as well what to do as you; and will do or let alone as we please.

Wild. This raging, and burning, and murdering must have an end one day sooner or later; and by renouncing it just now, we gain a brave leader.

Mez. How!—An end?—Thou traitor! why are we here but to avenge ourselves on our enemies, and enrich ourselves at their expense? Some slave of the nobles has been tampering with thee.

Kohl. Come, Wild, he is mad. [*Exeunt* WILD *and* KOHL.

Mez. Ay, go your way—few bands will stick by you. The villains!—Link, we 'll set on our friends here to burn

Meltenberg instantly; and when they make a bustle about the treaty, we 'll cut their heads off that made it.

Link. We have the great body of peasants still on our side. [*Exeunt with Insurgents.*

SCENE III.

A Hill, and prospect of the country. In the flat scene a Mill. A body of Horsemen ready to mount.

WEISLINGEN *comes out of the Mill, followed by* FRANCIS *and a Courier.*

Weis. My horse!—Have you told it to the other nobles?

Cour. At least seven standards will meet you in the wood behind Meltenberg. The peasants bend their course that way. Couriers are despatched in every direction to summon all your confederates. Our plan cannot fail, for they say there is division among them.

Weis. The better.—Francis!

Fran. Gracious sir.

Weis. Discharge thy errand punctually—I bind it upon thy soul. Give her the letter—She must from the court to my castle—instantly.—Thou must see her departure, and send me notice of it.

Fran. Your commands shall be obeyed.

Weis. Tell her she *shall* go.—(*To the Courier.*) Carry us the nearest and best road.

Cour. We must go round; all the rivers are up with the late dreadful rains. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Jaxthausen.

ELIZABETH *and* LERSE.

Lerse. Gracious lady, be comforted!

Eliz. Alas! Lerse, the tears stood in his eyes as he took leave of me.—It is dreadful, dreadful!

Lerse. He will soon return.

Eliz. It is not that.—When he went to wage honourable war, never did his danger sit so heavy at my heart—I then rejoiced at his return, which now I fear.

Lerse. So noble a man—

Eliz. Call him not so—There lies the new misery. The miscreants!—they threatened to murder his family and burn the castle. Should he return, gloomy, gloomy is the prospect. His enemies will raise scandalous falsehoods in accusation against him, which he never can disprove.

Lerse. He will, and can.

Eliz. He has broken his ban:—Canst thou say No?

Lerse. No!—he was constrained; and where is there reason to condemn him?

Eliz. Malice seeks not reasons, but pretexts. He has joined himself to rebels, malefactors, and murderers:—has become their chief. Say No to that.

Lerse. Cease to torture yourself and me. They have solemnly sworn to abjure all such doings as at Weinsberg. Did not I myself hear them say, in half remorse, that had not that been done already it should never have been done? Must not the princes and nobles return him their best thanks for having undertaken the dangerous office of leading these unruly people, in order to restrain their rage, and to save their lives and lands?

Eliz. Thou art an affectionate advocate. Should they take him prisoner, deal with him as a rebel, and bring his gray hairs——Lerse, I could run mad!

Lerse. Send sleep to refresh her body, dear Father of mankind, if thou deniest comfort to her soul!

Eliz. George promised to bring news—but he will not dare attempt it.—They are worse than prisoners.—Well I know they are watched like enemies.—The gallant boy! he would not quit his master.

Lerse. The very heart within me bled as I left him.—Had you not needed my help, all the dangers of grisly death should not have separated us.

Eliz. I know not where Seckingen is.—Could I but send a message to Maria!

Lerse. Do you write:—I will provide for that. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

A Village.

Enter GOETZ *and* GEORGE.

Goetz. To horse, George!—Quick!—I see Meltenberg burn—Is it thus they keep the treaty?—Ride to them—Tell them my purpose.—The murderous incendiaries—I renounce them—Let them make a very ruffian their captain, not *me*.—Quick, George! (*Exit* GEORGE.)—Would I were a thousand miles from hence, though I were at the bottom of the deepest dungeon in Turkey!—Could I but come off with honour from them!—I have contradicted them through the whole day, and told them the bitterest truths, that they might be weary of me and let me go.

Enter an Unknown.

Un. God greet you, gallant sir!

Goetz. I thank you!—Your name?

Un. It is not necessary. I come to tell you that your life is in danger—the insurgents are weary of receiving from you such harsh language, and are resolved to rid themselves of you—Lower your tone, or endeavour to escape from them; and God be with you! [*Exit.*

Goetz. In this way to lead thy life, Goetz! and thus to end it!—But be it so—My death will be the clearest proof to the world that I had nothing in common with the miscreants.

Enter Insurgents.

1 *In.* Captain, they are prisoners—they are slain!

Goetz. Who?

2 *In.* They who burned Meltenberg—A troop of confederated cavalry rushed on them from behind the hill, and overpowered them at once.

Goetz. They have their reward—O George! George! —They have found him among the caitiffs—My George! my George!

Enter Insurgents in confusion.

Link. Up, sir captain, up!—Here is no dallying time —the enemy is near, and in force.

Goetz. Who burned Meltenberg?

Mez. If you mean to make a quarrel, we 'll soon shew you we 'll end it.

Kohl. Look to your own safety and ours!—Up!

Goetz (to Mezler). Darest thou threaten me, thou worthless——Thinkest thou to awe me, because thy garments are clottered with the blood of murdered nobles?

Mez. Berlichingen!

Goetz. Darest thou pronounce my name?—My children will be ashamed to bear it after such contamination.

Mez. From thee this, villain?—slave of the nobles? —(GOETZ *strikes him down—he dies. Exit* GOETZ: *the rest disperse in confusion.—Alarm.*)

Kohl. Ye are mad!—The enemy breaks in on all hands, and you dally.

Link. Away! Away!—(*Cries and tumult—The Insurgents fly across the Stage.*)

Enter WEISLINGEN *and Troopers.*

Weis. Pursue! pursue!—Stop neither for darkness nor rain.—I hear Goetz is among them; see he escape you not—he is sore wounded, say our friends—*Exeunt.*

Troopers). And when I have thee—it will be doing him a favour to execute his sentence of death in prison —and then my foolish heart may beat more freely. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.

Scene changes to the front of a Gipsy-hut in a wild Forest. —Night.—A fire before the hut, at which sits the Mother of the Gipsies and a Girl—It rains and thunders.

Mother. Throw some fresh straw up the thatch, daughter: it rains fearfully.

Enter a Gipsy-boy.

Boy. A dormouse, mother!—and here, two field-mice!

Mother. Skin them and roast them, and thou shalt have a cap of their skins.—Thou bleedest!

Boy. Dormouse bitme.

Mother. Gather some thorns that the fire may burn bright when thy father comes: he will be wet through and through.

Other Gipsy-women enter with children at their backs.

1 *Woman.* Hast thou fared well?

2 *Woman.* Ill enough—The whole country is in uproar—one's life is not safe a moment. Two villages are in a light flame.

1 *Woman.* So it was the fire that glared in the sky—I looked at it long; for flaming meteors have become so common.

The Captain of the Gipsies enters with three of his gang.

Cap. Heard ye the wild huntsman?

1 *Woman.* He passed by us but this minute.

Cap. How the hounds gave tongue!—Wow! wow!

2 *Man.* How the whips clang!

3 *Man.* And the huntsman cheered them—Hollo—ho!

Mother. 'Tis the devil's chase.

Cap. We have been fishing in troubled waters. The peasants rob each other; we may be well pardoned helping them.

2 *Woman.* What hast thou got, Wolf?

Wolf. A hare and a cock—there's for the spit—A bundle of linen—some kitchen-ware—and a horse's bridle ——What hast thou, Sticks?

Sticks. A woollen jacket have I, and a pair of stockings, and one boot, and a flint and tinder-box.

Mother. It is all wet as mire, and the clothes are bloody. I'll dry them—give me here! (*Trampling without.*)

Cap. Hark!—A horse!—Go, see who it is.

Enter GOETZ *on horseback.*

Goetz. I thank thee, God! I see fire—they are gipsies. —My wounds bleed sorely—my foes close behind!—Great God, thou endest dreadfully with me!

Cap. Is it in peace thou comest?

Goetz. I crave help from you—My wounds are stiff with cold—Assist me from horse!

Cap. Help him!—A gallant warrior in appearance and language.

Wolf (*aside*). 'Tis Goetz of Berlichingen!

Cap. Welcome! welcome!—What we have is yours.

Goetz. I thank you.

Cap. Come to my hut. [*Exeunt to the hut.*

SCENE VII.

Scene, inside of the Hut.

Captain, Gipsies, and GOETZ.

Cap. Call our mother—let her bring blood-wort and bandages. (GOETZ *unarms himself.*)—Here is my holiday-doublet.

Goetz. God reward you! (*The mother binds his wounds.*)

Cap. I rejoice from my heart you are here.

Goetz. Do you know me?

Cap. Who does not know you, Goetz? Our lives and hearts' blood are yours.

Enter Gipsy-man.

Gipsy. Horsemen come through the wood—They are confederates.

Cap. Your pursuers!—They shall not reach you—Away, Schricks, call the others: we know the passes better than they—We shall bring them down ere they are aware of us.

[*Exeunt Captain and Men-gipsies with their guns.*

Goetz (*alone*). O Emperor! Emperor! Robbers protect thy children—(*A sharp fire of musketry is heard.*)—The wild foresters! Steady and true!

Enter Women.

Women. Save yourself!—The enemy have overpowered us.

Goetz. Where is my horse?

Women. Here!

Goetz (*girds his horse and mounts without his armour*). For the last time shall you feel my arm—Never was it so weak. [*Exit—Tumult.*

Women. He gallops to join our party. [*Firing.*

Enter WOLF.

Wolf. Away! Away! All is lost.—The Captain shot dead!—Goetz a prisoner.

[*The Women scream and fly into the wood.*

SCENE VIII.

Scene changes to ADELA'S *Bedchamber.*

Enter ADELA *with a letter.*

Adela. He or I!—The presumptuous—to threaten me! What glides through the antechamber? (*A low knock at the door.*) Who is without?

Fran. (*without*). Open, gracious lady!

Adela. Frank!—He well deserves that I should open to him. [*Admits him.*

Fran. (*throws himself on her neck*). My dear, my gracious lady!

Adela. Shameless being!—What if any one heard you?

Fran. O—all—all are asleep.

Adela. What wouldst thou?

Fran. I cannot rest. The threats of my master—your lot—mine.

Adela. He was incensed against me when you parted from him?

Fran. He was as I have never seen him.—To my castle, said he, she must—she *shall* go.

Adela. And must we obey?

Fran. I know not, dear lady!

Adela. Thou foolish, betrayed boy!—thou dost not see where this will end.—Here he knows I am in safety—Long has he envied my freedom—He desires to have me at his castle—then has he the power to use me as his hate shall dictate.

Fran. He shall not!

Adela. Wilt thou prevent him?

Fran. He shall not!

Adela. I foresee the whole misery of my lot. He will tear me by force from his castle to immure me in a cloister.

Fran. Hell and death!

Adela. Wilt thou rescue me?

Fran. All—all!

Adela (*throws herself weeping upon his neck*). Francis! —O rescue us!

Fran. I will tear the heart from his body!

Adela. No violence!—You shall carry a letter to him full of submission and obedience—Then give him this vial in his wine.

Fran. Give it!—Thou shalt be free.

Adela. Free!—And then no more shalt thou need to slip to me trembling and in fear—No more shall I need anxiously to say, "Away, Frank! the morning dawns."

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX.

The Street before the Prison at Heilbron.

ELIZABETH *and* LERSE.

Lerse. God relieve your distress, my gracious lady?—Maria is come.

Eliz. God be praised!—Lerse, we have sunk into the abyss of misery—Now my forebodings are fulfilled!—A prisoner—secured as an assassin and malefactor in the deepest dungeon.

Lerse. I know all.

Eliz. Know! Thou knowest nothing.—The distress is too great to be comprehended—His age, his wounds, a slow fever—and, more than all, the gloom of his own mind—There lies the mortal disorder!

Lerse. Ay, and that Weislingen should be commissioner!

Eliz. Weislingen?

Lerse. He is despatched with uncontrollable, unheard-of powers.—Link and the other chiefs have been burnt

alive—two hundred broken upon the wheel, beheaded, quartered, and impaled.—The country all round shews like a shambles where human flesh is rife and cheap.

Eliz. Weislingen commissioner!—O Heaven!—A ray of hope!—Maria shall to him: he cannot refuse her. He had ever a flexible heart; and when he sees her whom he once so loved, whom he has made so miserable ——Where is she?

Lerse. Still in the inn.

Eliz. Bring me to her.—She must away instantly.—I fear all. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE X.

Scene changes to the Castle of Weislingen.

WEISLINGEN *alone.*

Weis. I am so sick, so weak—My very bones are empty and hollow—this wretched fever has consumed their very marrow.—No rest, no sleep, day nor night!—and in the night such ghastly dreams!—Last night again I met Goetz in the wood—He waved his sword, and again defied me to battle—I grasped mine, my hand failed me.—In sleep as in reality he darted on me a contemptuous look, sheathed his weapon and went behind me—Dreadful is the vision as the scene it represented.—He is a prisoner; yet I tremble to think of him.—Miserable man! Thy own voice has condemned him; yet thou tremblest like a malefactor before the vision of the night—And shall he die?—Goetz! Goetz! we guide not ourselves—Fiends have empire over us, and lead our actions after their own hellish will, and to our eternal perdition. (*Sits down.*) Weak! Weak! How come my nails so discoloured?—A cold, cold wasting sweat drenches every limb—All swims before my eyes.—Could I but sleep!—Ha! (*Enter* MARIA.) Mother of God!—Leave

me in peace—leave me in peace!—It disappears not.—She is dead, and she appears to the traitor.—Leave me, blessed spirit! Already am I wretched enough.

Maria. Weislingen, I am no spirit.

Weis. It is her voice!

Maria. I come to implore my brother's life from thee—He is guiltless.

Weis. Hush!—Maria, angel of heaven as thou art, thou bringest with thee the pains of hell!—Speak no more!

Maria. And must my brother die?—Weislingen, it is horrible that from *me* thou must hear that he is guiltless; that it is *my* lot in bitter sorrow to restrain thee from the most abominable murder.—Thy soul is sunk low, low indeed!—Can this be Adelbert?

Weis. Thou seest—the consuming breath of death hath blasted me—my strength sinks to the grave—I die in misery, and thou comest to drive me to despair—Could I but speak, thy bitterest hate would melt into sorrow and compassion.—Oh, Maria, Maria!

Maria. Weislingen, my brother also is ill, and in prison—His severe wounds—his age—O couldst thou see his gray hairs!—Weislingen, we too despair.

Weis. Enough!——Francis!

Enter FRANCIS *in great agitation.*

Fran. Gracious sir!

Weis. The papers here, Francis—(*He gives them—Weislingen tears a packet, and shews Maria a paper.*)—Here is thy brother's sentence of death subscribed!

Maria. God in heaven!

Weis. And thus I tear it.—He lives!—But can I restore what I have destroyed?—Weep not so, Francis! My good youth, my distress lies deep at thy heart.

[*Francis throws himself at his feet, and clasps his knees.*

Maria (*apart*). He is ill—very ill. His appearance

rends my heart.—I loved him!—As I again approach him, I feel how dearly—

Weis. Francis, arise and cease to weep—I may recover!—Hope leaves only the dead.

Fran. You will not!—You must die!

Weis. Must?

Fran. (*beside himself*). Poison! Poison!—from your wife! I—I—gave it. [*Rushes out.*

Weis. Follow him, Maria—he is desperate.

[*Exit Maria.*

Weis. Poison from my wife!—Alas! alas! I feel it. Torture and death!

Maria (*within*). Help! help!

Weis. (*attempts to rise, but cannot*). God!—Not even that.

Maria (*re-entering*). He is gone! He threw himself desperately from a window of the hall into the river.

Weis. It is well with him!—Thy brother is out of danger!—The other commissioners, Seckendorf excepted, are his friends—They will readily allow him to ward himself upon his knightly word.—Farewell, Mary! —Now go.

Maria. I will stay by thee—Thou poor forsaken!

Weis. Poor and forsaken indeed!—O God, thou art a dreadful avenger!——My wife!

Maria. Remove from thee that thought—Turn to the throne of mercy.

Weis. Go, thou gentle soul! witness not my misery! Horrible! Even thy company, Maria, even the attendance of my only comforter, is agony.

Maria (*aside*). Strengthen me, Heaven!—My soul suffers as his.

Weis. Alas! alas! Poison from my wife!——My Francis seduced by the detestable!—She waits—hearkens after every horse's hoof for the messenger that brings her news of my death—And thou too, Maria, wherefore

art thou come to awake every slumbering recollection of my sins?—Leave me, leave me, that I may die!

Maria. Let me stay! Thou art alone:—think me thy nurse—Forget all—May God forgive thee as freely as I forgive!

Weis. Thou spirit of love! pray for me! pray for me! —my lips are locked.

Maria. He will forgive thee—Thou art weak.

Weis. I die! I die!—and yet I cannot die—In the fearful contest betwixt life and death are the pains of hell.

Maria. Merciful Father, have compassion upon him!—Grant him one glance of thy love, that his heart may be opened to comfort, and his soul to the hope of eternal life, even in the agony of death!

SCENE XI.

A narrow vault dimly illuminated—The Judges of the Secret Tribunal discovered seated, all muffled in black cloaks, and silent.

Eldest Judge. Judges of the Secret Tribunal, sworn by the cord and the steel to be unpitying in justice, to judge in secret, and to avenge in secret, like the Deity! are your hands clean and hearts pure?—Raise them to heaven, and cry, Woe upon misdoers!

All. Woe! woe!

Eldest Judge. Cryer, begin the diet of judgment.

Cryer. I cry for accusation against misdoers! Whose heart is pure, whose hand is clean, let him accuse, and call upon the steel and the cord for Vengeance! vengeance! vengeance!

Accuser (*comes forward*). My heart is pure from misdeed, and my hand clean from innocent blood:—God pardon my sins of ignorance, and frame my steps to His way!—I raise my hand aloft, and cry, Vengeance! vengeance! vengeance!

Eldest Judge. Vengeance upon whom?

Accuser. I call upon the cord and upon the steel for vengeance against Adela von Weislingen.—She has committed adultery and murder—she has poisoned her husband by the hands of his servant—the servant hath slain himself—the husband is dead.

Eldest Judge. Swearest thou by the God of truth, that thy accusation is true?

Accuser. I swear.

Eldest Judge. Dost thou take upon thy own head the punishment of murder and adultery, should it be found false?

Accuser. I take it.

Eldest Judge. Your voices?

[*They converse a minute in low whispers.*

Accuser. Judges of the Secret Tribunal, what is your doom upon Adela von Weislingen, accused of murder and adultery?

Eldest Judge. She shall die!—shall die a bitter and double death!—By the double doom of the steel and the cord shall she expiate the double misdeed. Raise your hands to heaven, and cry, Woe unto her!—Be she given to the hand of the avenger.

All. Woe! woe!

Eldest Judge. Come forth, avenger! (*A man advances.*) There hast thou the cord and the steel!—Within eight days must thou take her from before the face of heaven: wherever thou findest her, let her no longer cumber the ground.—Judges, ye that judge in secret, and avenge in secret like the Deity, God keep your hearts from wickedness, and your hands from innocent blood! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XII.

The Court of an Inn.

LERSE *and* MARIA.

Maria. The horses are enough rested; we will away, Lerse.

Lerse. Stay till to-morrow; the night is dreadful.

Maria. Lerse, I cannot rest till I have seen my brother. Let us away: the weather clears up—we may expect a fair morning.

Lerse. Be it as you will. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XIII.

The Prison at Heilbron.

GOETZ *and* ELIZABETH.

Eliz. I entreat thee, my dear husband, be comforted! —Thy silence distresses me—thou retirest within thyself. Come, let me see thy wounds; they mend daily. In this moody melancholy I know thee no longer.

Goetz. If thou seekest Goetz, he is long since gone! One by one have they robbed me of all I held dear—my hand, my property, my freedom, my renown!—My life! what is that to what I have lost?—What hear you of George? Is Lerse gone to inquire for George?

Eliz. He is, my love! Raise yourself—you will sit more easily.

Goetz. Whom God hath struck down raises himself no more!—I best know the load I have to bear—Misfortune I am inured to support—But now it is not Weislingen alone, not the peasants alone, not the death of the Emperor, or my wounds—It is the whole united. ——My hour is come! I had hoped it would have come only with my death—But His will be done!

Eliz. Wilt thou eat any thing?

Goetz. No, my love!—Does the sun shine without?

Eliz. A fine spring day.

Goetz. My love, wilt thou ask the keeper's permission for me to walk in his little garden for half an hour, to enjoy the clear face of heaven, the open air, and the blessed sun?

Eliz. I will—and he will readily grant it. [*Exit.*

SCENE XIV.

The Garden belonging to the Prison.

LERSE *and* MARIA.

Maria. Go, see how it stands with them.

[*Exit* LERSE.

Enter ELIZABETH *and Keeper.*

Eliz. (*to the Keeper*). God reward your kindness and mercy to my husband! (*Exit Keeper.*)—Maria, what bringest thou?

Maria. Safety to my brother!—But my heart is torn asunder—Weislingen is dead! poisoned by his wife.—My husband is in danger—the princes will be too powerful for him; they say he is surrounded and besieged.

Eliz. Hearken not to rumour; and let not Goetz remark aught.

Maria. How is it with him?

Eliz. I fear he will hardly long survive thy return; the hand of the Lord is heavy on him.——And George is dead!

Maria. George!—The gallant boy!

Eliz. When the miscreants were burning Meltenberg, his master sent him to check their villainy—At that moment a body of cavalry charged upon them: had they all behaved as George, they would have given a good

account of them—Many were killed: and poor George —he died the death of a cavalier!

Maria. Does Goetz know it?

Eliz. We conceal it from him. He asks me ten times a day about him, and sends me as often to see what is become of George. I fear his heart will not bear this last wound.

Maria. O God! what are the hopes of this world!

Enter GOETZ, LERSE, *and Keepers.*

Goetz. Almighty God! how well it is to be under thy heaven! How free! The trees put forth their buds, and all the world hopes.——Farewell, my children! my buds are crushed, my hope is in the grave!

Eliz. Shall I not send Lerse to the cloister for thy son, that thou mayst see and bless him?

Goetz. Leave him where he is—he needs not my blessing—he is holier than I. Upon our wedding, Elizabeth, could I have thought I should die thus!—My old father blessed us, and a succession of noble and gallant sons arose at his prayer—Thou hast not heard him—I am the last.——Lerse, thy countenance cheers me in the hour of death, as in our most noble fights: then, my spirit encouraged yours; now, yours supports mine.——Oh that I could but see George once more, to warm myself at his look!—You look down and weep—He is dead? George is dead?—Die, Goetz! Thou hast outlived thyself—outlived the noblest——How died he? —Alas, they took him at Meltenberg, and he is executed?

Eliz. No—he was slain there!—he defended his freedom like a lion.

Goetz. God be praised!—He was the kindest youth under the sun, and a gallant.——Now dismiss my soul— My poor wife! I leave thee in a wretched world. Lerse, forsake her not!—Lock your hearts carefully as your doors. The age of frankness and freedom is past—that

of treachery begins. The worthless will gain the upper-hand by cunning, and the noble will fall into their net. Maria, God restore thy husband to thee!—may he never fall the deeper for having risen so high!—Selbiss is dead —and the good Emperor—and my George——Give me some water!——Heavenly sky!—Freedom! freedom!

[*He dies.*

Eliz. Only above! above with thee!—The world is a prison-house.

Maria. Gallant and gentle!—Woe to this age that has lost thee!

Lerse. And woe to the future, that cannot know thee!

END OF GOETZ OF BERLICHINGEN.

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